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Friday
1 Nov. '96

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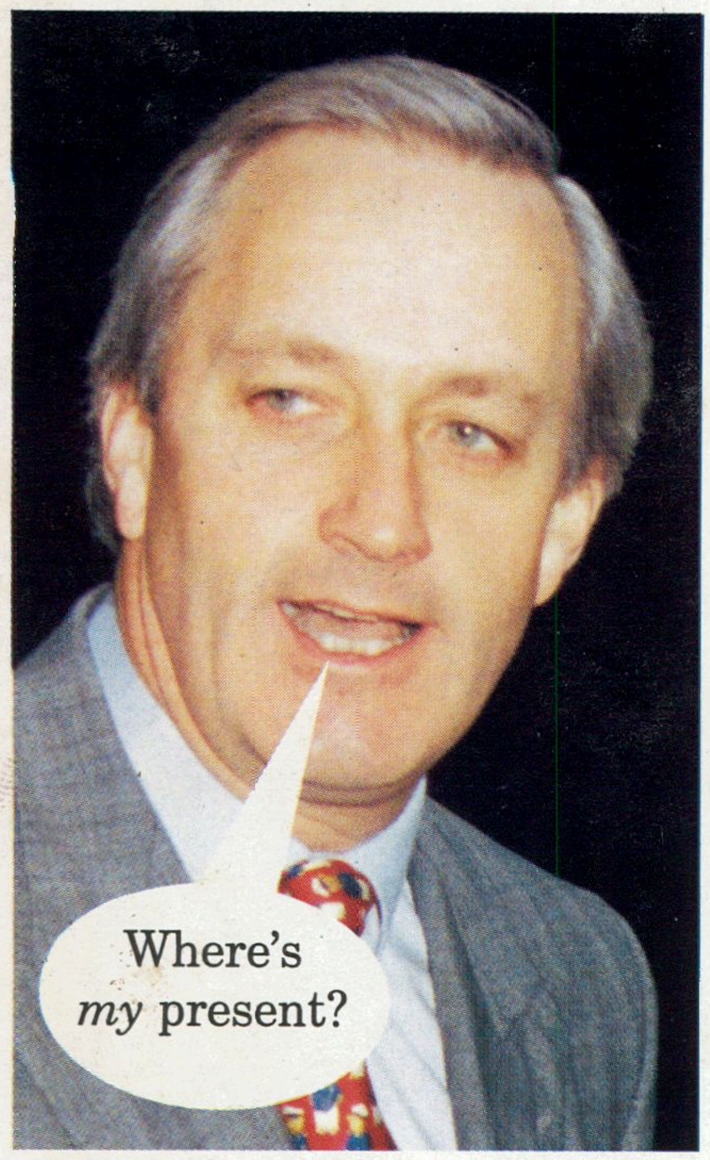

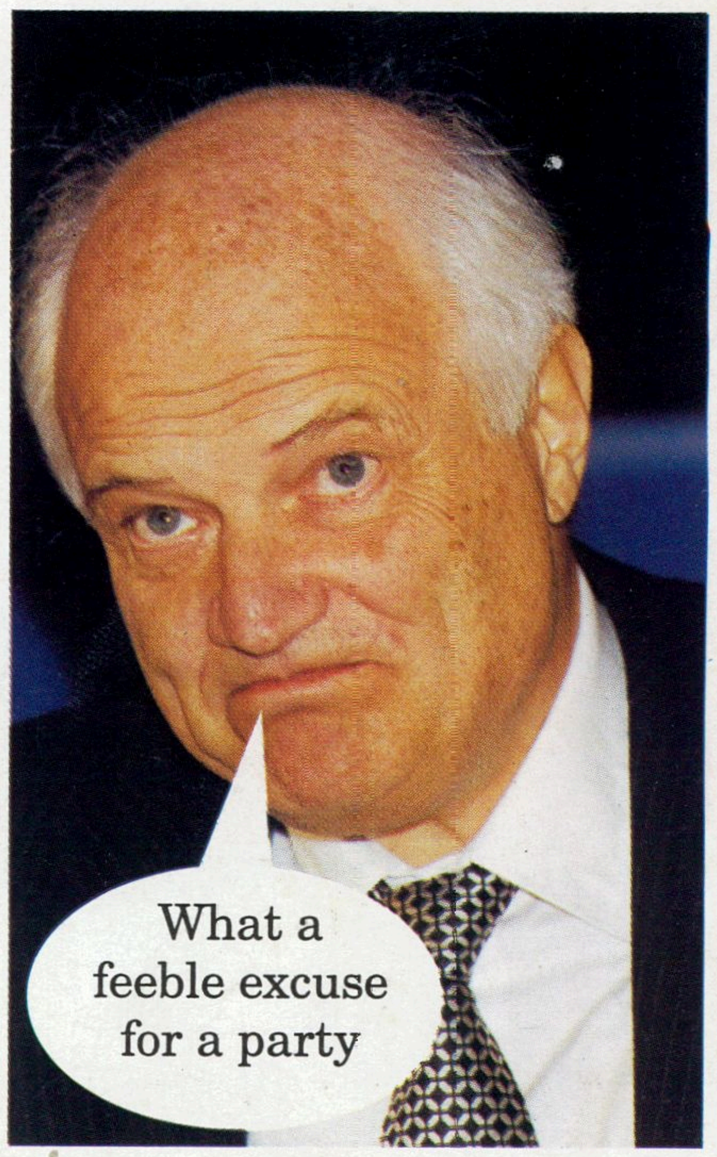

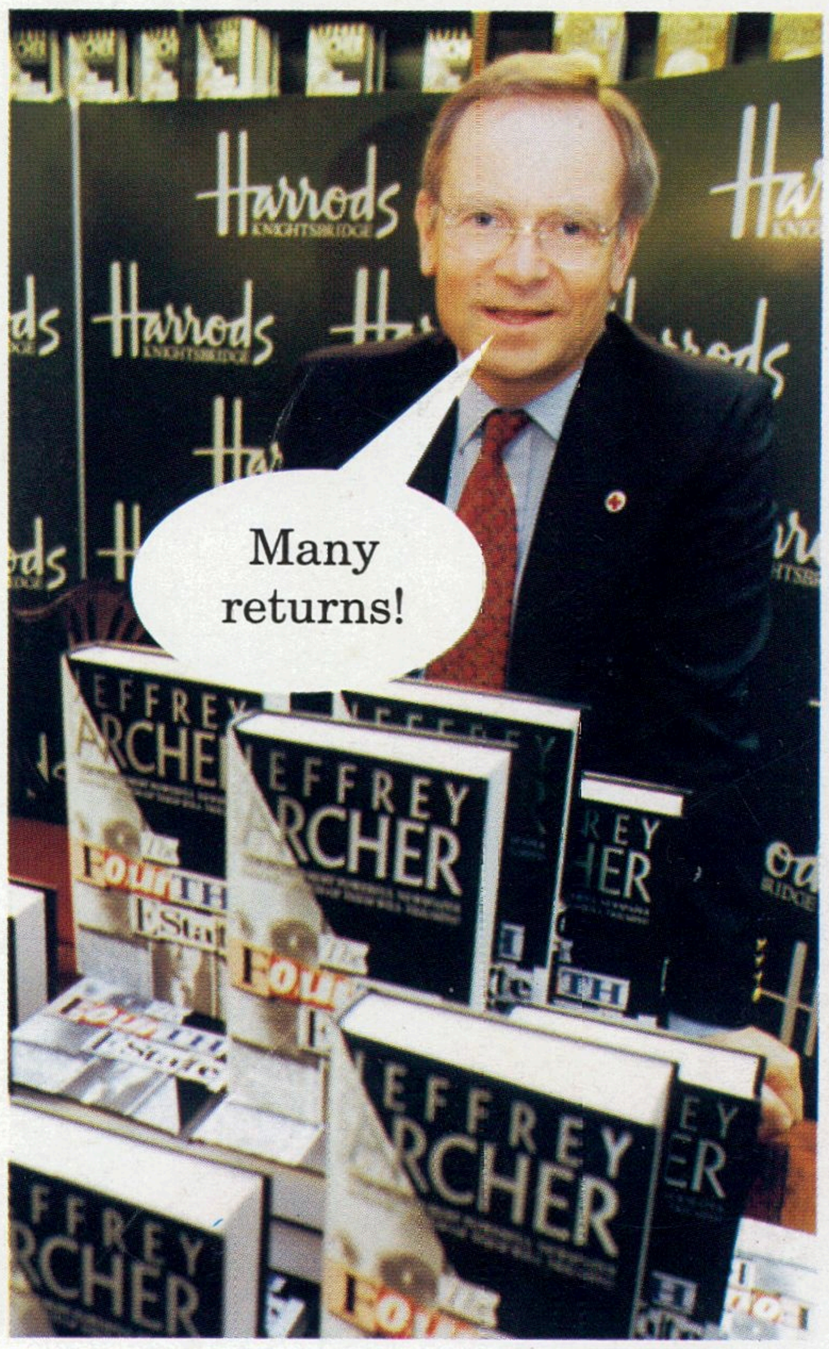

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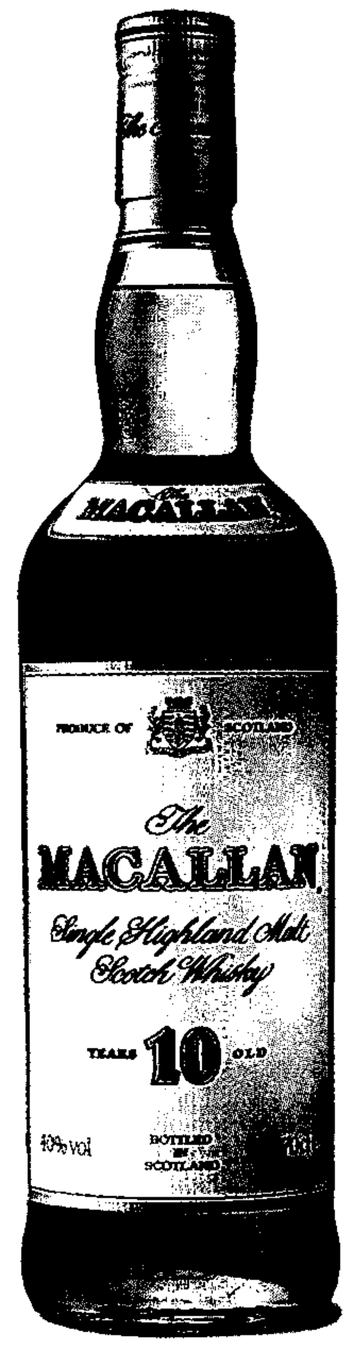

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Gnome

THERE can be no doubt that this newspaper has led the debate about the breakdown of conventional morality and the failure of our society to provide sufficient support for traditional family values.

Let us state once again our firm conviction that respect for marriage must be the cornerstone of any new initiative by the government to try and remedy the desperate condition in which this nation finds itself.

Matrimony may not be fashionable in this increasingly secular Britain, but there comes a time when everyone must support the Daily Gnome's view — *viz.* that this institution is the bedrock of any civilised culture which is concerned about the rearing of its youth.

Lord Gnome is therefore setting up a "Daily Gnome Moral Initiative Group" to be run by the well-known ethical spokesperson Miss Rita Chevrolet, whose previous posts include that of Lord Gnome's personal masseuse, picture editor of the Daily Gnome Page 3 feature, and chief scheduler for GnomePorn Satellite TV.

In her expert hands, I am convinced that this organ can continue to strengthen our national fibres and stiffen our moral sinews.

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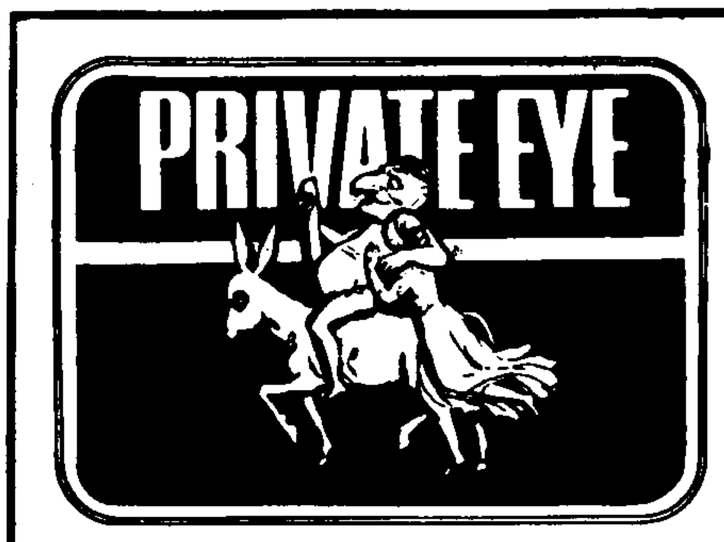

COLOUR SECTION

THE amazing proposal to allow London's famous Barts hospital to be replaced by a mammoth new hospital — run by a construction company and a civil engineering group — is being rushed through without even a pretence at consultation with Barts' consultants.

On 9 October six top consultants in the three major hospitals in the Barts group wrote to the Royal Hospital trust (chairman: Sir Derek Boorman, former head of military intelligence in Northern Ireland), begging it to ease up on plans to close the old hospitals before proper consultation has taken place on the space available for medical services in the new one.

The letter was not even answered when, on 15 October, the trust announced the names of the lucky new contractors. They are the big building contractor AMEC and civil engineers Pell Frischmann, who made such a tidy profit from the sale of the Property Services Agency. In exchange for building the new hospital, these contractors will win the right to run it (and probably to build a luxury hotel and fitness centre on site into the bargain). The choice of AMEC and Pell Frischmann appears to have been a foregone conclusion. It was miraculously announced in *The Link*, the staff newspaper for the trust, which was printed on 14 October — the day before the trust met to make its final decision.

PS: No one knows more about the advantages to big companies of the privatisation of the Property Services Agency than Sir Derek Boorman, who until last year was director of the main beneficiary, Tarmac.

ONE of the most interesting moments in Tom Bower's BBC programme on Robert Maxwell is the statement from Mirror Group Newspapers' former managing director, Ernie Burrington, that he tried to warn his colleagues on the board about money vanishing from company coffers.

Burrington alleged that the two colleagues, Sir Robert Clark, still chairman of MGN, and Alan Clements, then the deputy chairman, had decided to do nothing. At the last moment, Clark and Clements both tried (unsuccessfully) to stop or alter Bower's programme.

Both men must be nervously awaiting the inexplicably delayed report of department of trade inspectors into the gigantic theft of Mirror money by Maxwell in the last nine months of his life. Equally nervous about the report are two former directors of MGN in the year of the Great Theft: Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson, now managing director of MGN, and Joe Haines.

Amusingly, JOE HAINES ON THE HYPOCRITES WHO FAWNED ON MAXWELL was the teasing headline on the front page of a recent *Punch* (1 November). There followed four pages of lists of the aforesaid fawning hypocrites — with only a single passing reference to arguably the most fawning hypocrite of them all: Joe Haines, Maxwell's non-executive director, political editor and author of a disgraceful hagiography of the fat crook.

UNITED Utilities chairman Sir Desmond Pitcher has said Labour's proposed windfall tax on the privatised utilities is unfair and discriminatory. He will challenge it — in the courts if necessary.

Workers at Pitcher's merged electricity and water companies in the north-west will be interested in their boss's definition of unfair and discriminatory. Last year he earned £338,000, making him one of the fattest cats of all (see *Eye* 864).

Also qualifying as unfair is the Grand Regatta Columbus fiasco, which was sponsored by the Merseyside Development Corporation (chaired by Pitcher). According to the Commons public accounts committee (PAC), this tall ships event "cost the public sector and local businesses in excess of £1m with little evidence of any beneficial effect on inward investment".

The event finished with a concert handled by Carroll Promotions, a company which had assets of £2 and was run by Pitcher's chum Brendan Carroll. Local companies, who were owed thousands by Carroll Promotions and who believed, wrongly, that the development corporation was underwriting the event, might also have a word to say about Pitcher's definition of unfair.

***FLOWERS in the Forest*, a BBC 2 drama on 26 October, examined the difficulties experienced by social workers who, despite brainwashing by so-called satanic ritual "experts", try to remain objective while investigating allegations of satanic abuse.**

Those who saw the programme, relieved that the infamous Orkney and Cleveland abuse accusations are behind us, will be interested to hear of a conference on ritual abuse that was held as recently as 13 and 14 September at Warwick university, tastelessly entitled "Better the Devil You Know?"

One of those listed as a keynote speaker was Catherine Gould, the American clinical psychologist whose "List of Satanic Indicators" became pivotal to the satanic abuse hysteria in America and then the UK. Although the "indicators" were incredibly naive, they were used by British social workers to identify probable cases. Gould's list included pulling the arms off dolls, a fear of ghosts and monsters and letters and numbers written backwards as probable indicators of children suffering satanic abuse.

- *Hamilton/Oyston/Rifkind — News* 7
- *Hallo! to Brenda, Jammy and Shezza* 9
- *In The Tearoom with Robin Cook* 10
- *Hackwatch: Murdoch & Morality* 13
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- *Stagg Hunting — Footnotes* 28

TOGETHER AGAIN

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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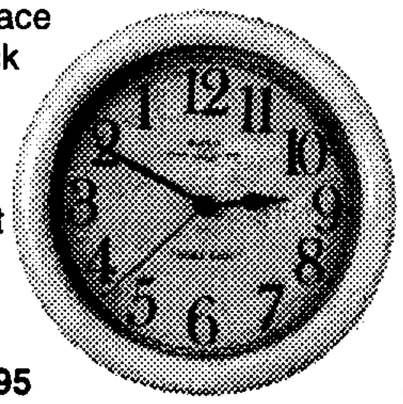

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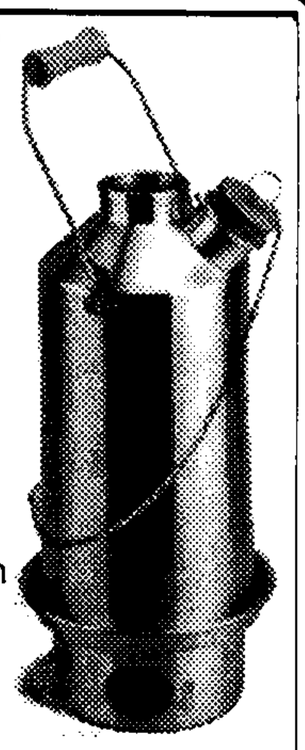

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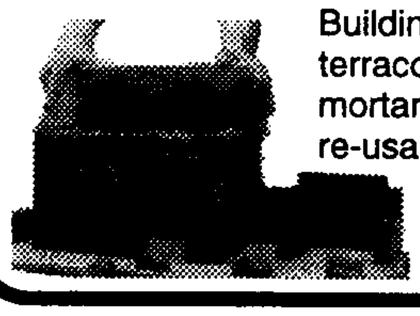

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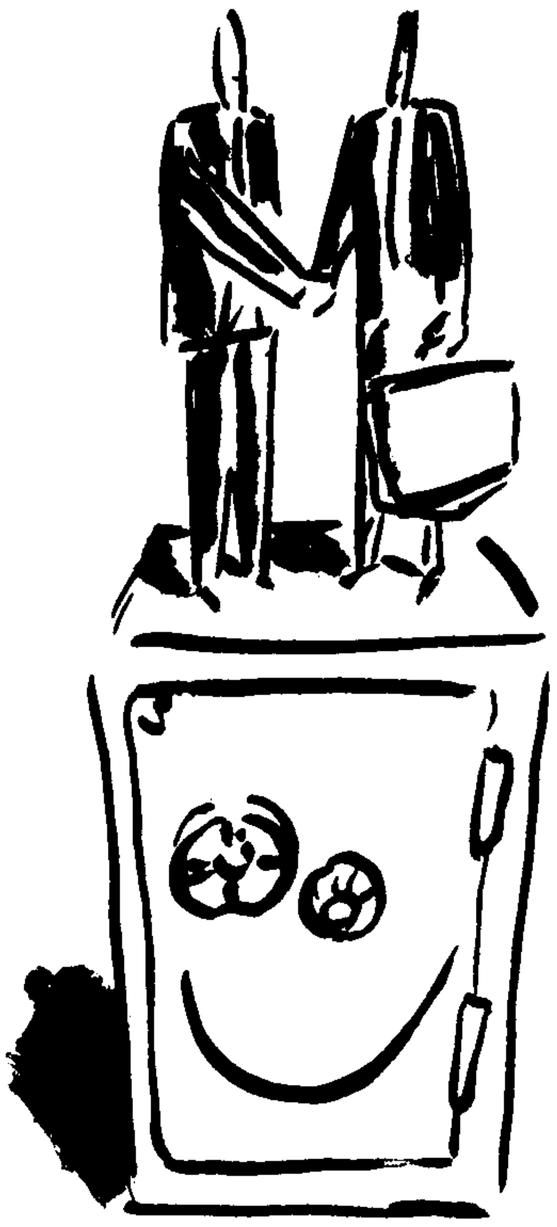

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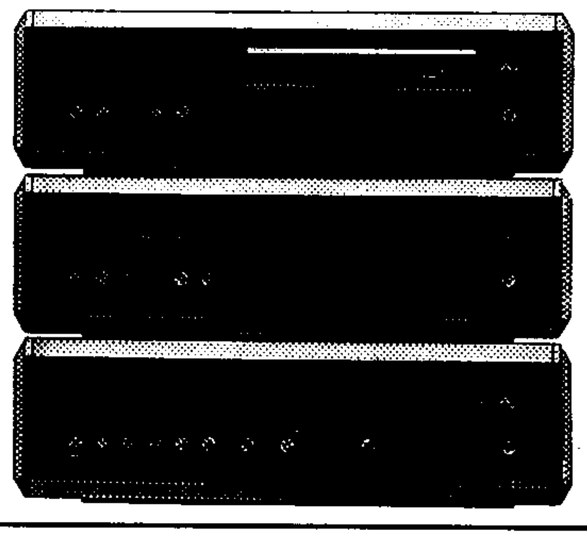

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NEWS

DON'T LIE FOR ME, ARGENTINA

LESS than a year after the Scott report, the government is again desperately fighting off allegations that an arms embargo has been broken: this time in selling engines for warships to the old enemy, Argentina.

The foreign office official denial machine has been in overdrive since Channel Four's two *Despatches* programmes seemed to prove that warship engines are being sold to the Argentinian navy, despite what most people believe is an embargo on exporting military equipment to that country.

The programme quoted a spokesman for Rolls Royce twice confirming that the company had in the past been refused permission to export spare parts for Tyne engines in Argentinian warships — but that this ban had been reversed last year. The programme's assistant producer asked a Rolls Royce spokesman: "I just want to be clear in my own head from Rolls Royce's own position that the parts that are now able to be sold were parts that previously the DTI refused to grant export licences for."

The man from Rolls Royce answered: "Yeah."

There was plenty of other evidence that the guidelines have been changed (to coin a phrase) in favour of exporting the engines. For years after the Falklands war, the Argentinian navy tried to make the vital spare parts itself at a special factory near New York. And Argentinian navy leaders confirmed their profound relief that engine spare parts which were previously banned were now available from Britain.

The foreign office, however, tells the *Eye* that all this is "absolutely totally denied", and that the spare parts could have been exported at any time in the last 11 years, absolutely free of any restraint. "These parts are not licensable under the legislation," explained the spokesman. "They are not covered by the embargo. I cannot emphasise strongly enough that there has been no relaxation of the embargo."

In spite of the denial there are several familiar features in the case which recall the arms-to-Iraq scandal.

- The anomaly that the embargo applies only to some parts of the warship engines and not others; or even to the engines themselves. This suggests that engines for warships are not considered "military".
- The occupation of a "hot seat" by Malcolm Rifkind, minister of defence during Iraqgate, foreign secretary today.
- The apparently differing "interpretations" of an arms embargo by the department of trade and industry and the foreign office.
- The lack of interest by the government press — notably the *Sunday Times*, which in its first issue after the *Despatches* programmes made no reference to the issue, but carried on the front page of its Business News a terrific puff for Rolls Royce.
- The indifference of the Labour opposition. Though urged to raise the matter after the queen's speech, Robin Cook, shadow foreign secretary, did not to so.

Will this one run and run? You bet.

THE COOK, THE RAPIST, THE CHIP SHOP PROPRIETOR AND DOUGLAS HURD...

AT LEAST one person still believes there was a conspiracy to jail the "socialist tycoon" Owen Oyston for rape.

Doreen Cook, a Lancashire newsagent, has complained to Douglas Hurd, now a director of NatWest, that she was introduced by her NatWest bank manager to a "disastrous company spin doctor". Mrs Cook, whose paper shop has been financially hit by prolonged road works, says the "spin doctor" boasted: "I'm the man who put Owen Oyston where he is today."

The man turns out to be our old chum Michael Murrin (see *Eyes passim*), a sometime insurance agent, ratepayers' leader, private detective and fish-and-chip shop owner who ran an epic 13-year campaign against Oyston. During the long vendetta he was successfully sued for libel by both Oyston and the chief constable of Lancashire.

"At first we could not understand why this man, who came into our home on the word of our bank, had such an obsession about Owen Oyston," Mrs Cook told the *Eye*. "We tolerated his antics because he was highly recommended by NatWest." But her patience soon became frayed. At one point, while he was insisting on "total control" of her cheque books, Murrin "snatched a crucifix from my wall and flung it at me, saying 'if you believe this bloody nonsense you'd better start praying. You're going to need it!' " Learning that she had been a Community Health Council member, he denounced her as "a bloody Tory who is to blame for the state of this country", and warned her that the last person to fall foul of him — Oyston — ended up behind bars.

She wrote to her local NatWest complaining about Murrin's "sacrilegious and disgraceful behaviour", adding that "he followed procedures which cannot be encouraged or condoned, including the use of a bugging device on our telephone". When the branch manager denied any responsibility, she took her grievance to Douglas Hurd.

Mrs Cook and her husband are now asking NatWest to compensate them for losses of £250,000. Robert Atkins, their constituency MP, is helping with their battle for financial survival. "Robert is talking to NatWest in London. He knows from personal experience what this man Murrin is like."

He certainly does. While being sued for libel by Oyston some years ago, Murrin handed over a large collection of his tape-recorded telephone conversations with two former Tory ministers who apparently shared his loathing of the socialist tycoon. They were Lord Blaker and... Robert Atkins MP. Atkins later told an interviewer he was "absolutely appalled beyond belief" to learn that Murrin had recorded his calls.

Meanwhile prison has not dampened Oyston's enthusiasm for litigation: last week he issued yet another high court writ for defamation against the former fish-and-chip merchant. "I haven't a penny to hire lawyers," Murrin wailed to the *Lancashire Evening Post*, "but I have a good name to defend." Shome mishtake, shurely?

SLEAZY DOES IT

ONE of the most charming presents from lobbyist Ian Greer to his friend Neil Hamilton MP was a couple of Cornish watercolours which Greer and his wife bought from Tony Sanders, an up-market antique dealer in Penzance.

One, of the Newlyn school, cost £500; and the other, Scamper, £200. The Hamiltons chose the pictures when on holiday visiting Christine Hamilton's father in Cornwall in the spring of 1988. The £700 bill was sent to Ian Greer Associates.

THE serious fraud office (SFO) has some sad news for anyone who feels that the sleaze story will have run its course by the May general election.

The SFO tells the *Eye* that the case of R v Clive Smith, John Clarke, Kenneth Clews and Herbert Roy Bichan will be coming on at the Old Bailey some time in April at the height of the election campaign. The four men are accused of conspiring "to defraud such persons as might be minded to purchase shares in Butte Mining Plc" by dishonestly publishing false statements, concealing from the public the true identity of the people who would benefit from the shares sale and "concealing the fact that they intended to benefit from shares issued as consideration or their proceeds".

Butte, *Eye* readers will recall, had links to Plateau Mining (bust, owing £11m) whose most distinguished director was Neil Hamilton MP. To make matters even more embarrassing for the government, Herbert Roy Bichan is a former deputy chairman of the Welsh Development Agency.

THE *Observer*'s revelations that Ian Greer represented Whitbread, the brewer, and set up a parliamentary beer club as part of a campaign to keep beer taxes down must have interested the MP for Reading West, Sir Anthony Durant.

A proposal from Greer to Whitbread in 1993 said MPs could be "encouraged" to raise the question of beer in the House of Commons "through early-day motions, adjournment debates, and private members' business". At question time on 28 October 1993, Sir Anthony asked the then minister for agriculture, Gillian Shepherd, "if she would attend the great British beer festival in 1994 to discuss the promotion of British beer".

Durant lashed out at unfair competition from the French beer industry, and decried redundancies in a Courage brewery in his constituency. Sir Anthony, as he occasionally boasts, is normally a very quiet MP who speaks up occasionally for the National Federation of Demolition Contractors, which pays him. On one occasion (16 May 1991) he announced: "In this House I represent the National Federation of Demolition Contractors." This startled his colleagues who thought he represented the good people of Reading West. Durant's constituency party got one of the celebrated 1987 "donations" from I. Greer.

PS: Can you name the paid parliamentary consultant to the Brewers Society from 1987 to 1989? Of course you can. It was Neil Hamilton MP.

EVERYONE knows that after a dramatic intervention by the BBC governors, Tory MPs Neil Hamilton and Gerald Howarth won their 1985 libel case against the corporation for the programme *Maggie's Militant Tendency*, which discussed alleged links between leading Tories and far-right organisations.

However, fewer people know that one of the sources for the libel and another defendant in the action, Phil Pedley (who was then national chairman of the Young Conservatives), refused to withdraw what he had said and written even after the BBC collapsed. He stuck to his guns, changed solicitors and eventually came in front of Mr Justice Simon Brown.

The MPs did not proceed with their case against him, so the high court judge decreed that Pedley had not committed any libel — and that the plaintiffs were debarred from suing if he made the same allegations again.

Street Of Shame

LORD Rees-Mogg's verdict on *The Common Good*, the Catholic bishops' manifesto, was utterly withering.

"I have never yet come across a bishop of any denomination who has made any serious study of economic theory," he sneered, "or could conceivably pass an economics A level."

Can this be the same Rees-Mogg who wrote a long article for *The Times* last year revealing that the British economy was the most successful in the world, having enjoyed growth rates 75 per cent higher than Japan throughout the years of Tory government? Alas, his entire thesis was based on a complete misreading of OECD statistics — an elementary schoolboy howler even a bishop might have avoided.

SIR James Goldsmith, who has just elected himself leader of the Referendum party, has hired a new consultant with the impossible task of inflating the ego of the French philanderer. Step forward Brian "Bulldog" Hitchen, former editor of the *Daily Star* and *Sunday Express*.

Hitchen was hired six months ago on a monthly retainer after being introduced by society zookeeper John Aspinall who had received some favourable publicity in the *Daily Star*. One of his tasks was to research and then edit a tabloid newspaper promoting the Referendum party.

It is not known whether Jemima Goldsmith has been asked to appear on Page 3 by the former *Daily Star* editor.

MEDIA pundits were puzzled by the short length of time the *Daily Mirror* devoted to rubbishing the *Sun* after it fell for the spoof Princess Diana and James Hewitt video.

Mirror editor Piers Morgan was ecstatic when public relations' sleaziest practitioner Max Clifford phoned to tell him that Hedges wanted to sell the story behind the film's creation. Clifford had been assured by Hedges that he had not had any recent involvement with the video and had nothing to do with its sale to the *Sun*. The next day the *Mirror* jubilantly ran with the "true" story behind the Diana video hoax.

But as the rag continued to interview the prankster in the hope of a string of crowing follow-ups, hacks realised his story did not add up. It was not months since he had contact with his video as he had first claimed — it was but a few weeks.

The *Mirror* could not be seen to condone the hoax and quickly clammed up on the whole affair, carrying no more Hedges stories and refusing to pay Hedges or Clifford for their tale. Alas, the *Mirror* may end up having to pay the prankster indirectly. The day of the *Sun*'s story, the Mirror Group's television station, L!veTV, replayed the tape for the salacious enjoyment of its viewer(s). It, like the *Sun*, had apparently not noticed that the man in the picture looked nothing like Hewitt and was shorter than the Diana lookalike. As the video is legally Hedges' property, L!veTV — and thus the Mirror Group — will have to give him some money after all.

As for Clifford, in a flash of double-dealing brilliance, he recovered his loss by taking another story to a national paper. This time the PR man went to the *Sunday Mirror* with a video, given to him by a former landlord of... Nick Hedges. The new video featured Hedges, whom the *Sunday Mirror* labelled a "podgy pervert", in bed with his girlfriend whom he, Hedges, had secretly filmed in his north London flat.

SINISTER press baron Conrad Black is keen on family values — particularly his own family in the person of Ms Barbara Amiel, his wife.

With the recent acquisition of a majority share in Southam Inc, which publishes 16 daily Canadian newspapers, Blackadder has lots of space to fill with his entertaining right-wing world view — and woe betide any editor who is less than keen about his chosen messengers.

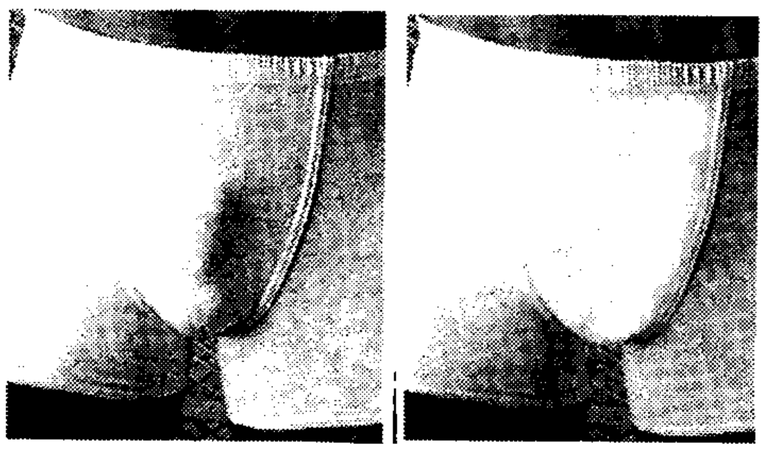
At the *Ottawa Citizen*, for example, the editor-in-chief was fired for failing to show suitable enthusiasm for the new "national affairs columnist" Black had personally recruited — one Barbara Amiel.

Having worked her way up from a secretarial position at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Lady McBlack has come full circle, returning from the UK to inflict her deranged views on Canadian readers across the Southam Group: in a regular column for the national newsweekly *Maclean's*, and in a syndicated rant that appears throughout the chain of *Sun* tabloids.

JUST FANCY THAT (OR NOT)

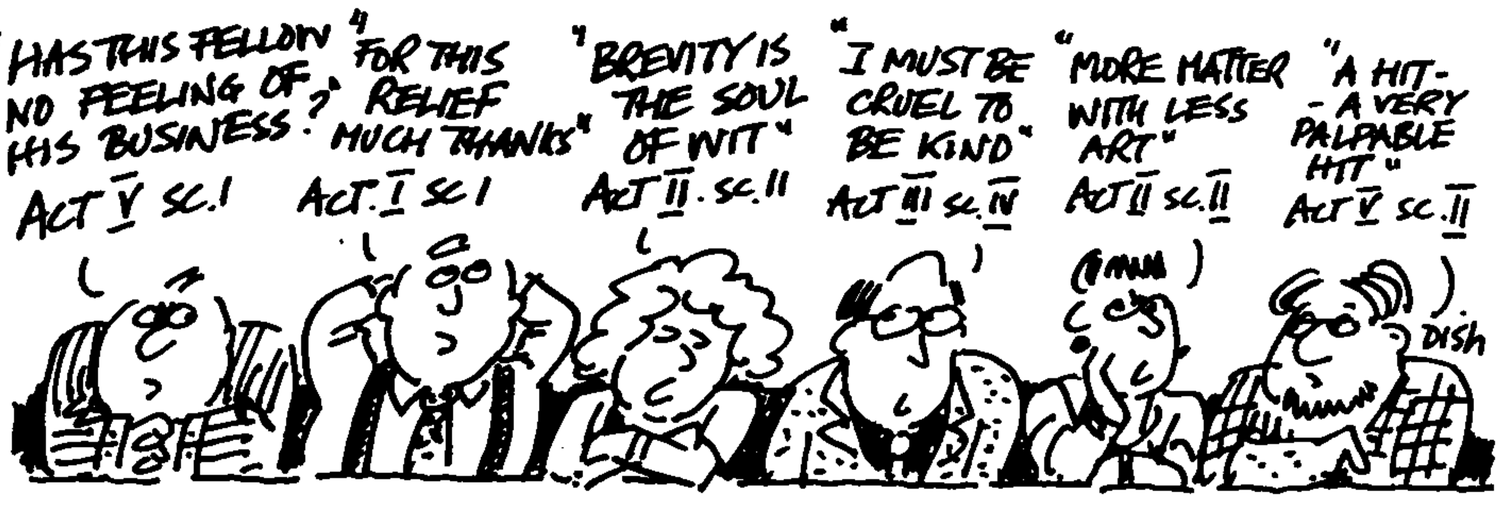
THE fearless *Sun* is going soft — not on the nipples and bosoms which litter the rag, but on men's willies.

Compare and contrast the accompanying photos which recently appeared in the same day's paper. The *Sun*'s Chippendale-loving female readers would have been distraught to see the damage a mere air-brush can inflict on a healthy set of male genitals — although few will have bought both the first and second editions, in which the two pictures appeared.

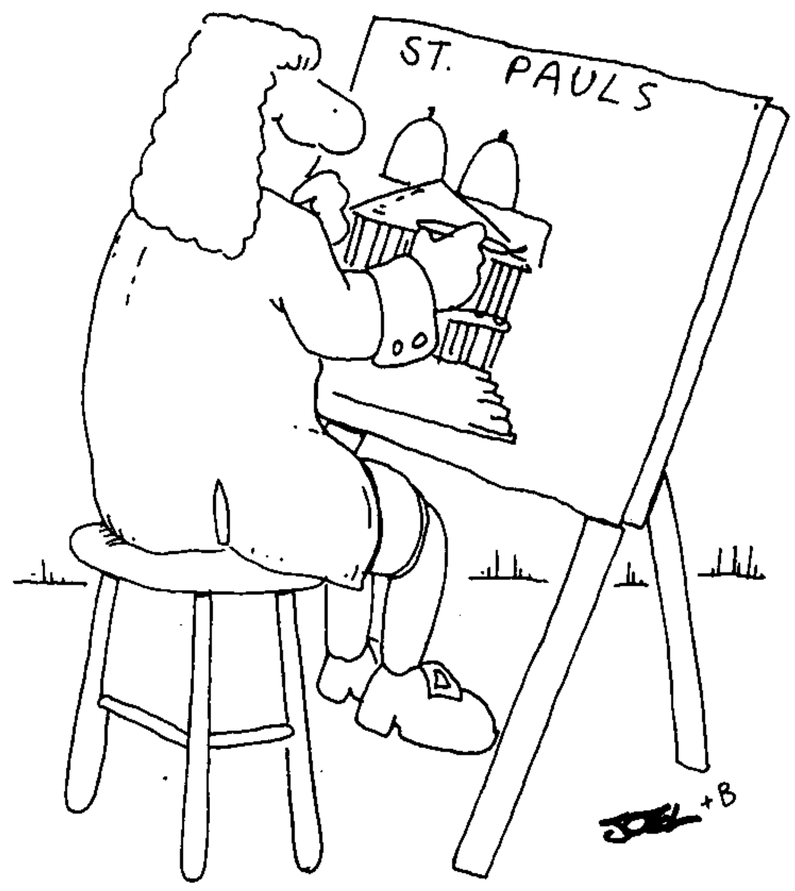


THE *Grauniad*'s bungling picture editor Eamonn McCabe (see *Eyes passim*) nearly wiped the grin off Alan Rusbridger's face last week when he asked the picture library for the file on Neil Hamilton — "that nutter who killed the kids in Dunblane".

Fortunately, as always with "mad" McCabe, a minion was on hand to avert disaster.


"HAS THIS FELLOW NO FEELING OF HIS BUSINESS?
ACT V SC.I
"FOR THIS RELIEF MUCH THANKS"
ACT I SC I
"BREVITY IS THE SOUL OF WIT"
ACT II. SC.II
"I MUST BE CRUEL TO BE KIND"
ACT III SC.IV
"MORE MATTER WITH LESS ART"
ACT II SC.II
"A HIT- A VERY PALPABLE HIT"
ACT V SC.II
DISH

The committee to discuss the cutting of Branagh's four-hour film of Hamlet



Wren Behaving Badly

CHRISTMAS is coming — and with it, as every year, the inevitable increase in plugs by *Daily Telegraph* chess correspondent Malcolm Pein for his own businesses in his column.

Last Wednesday, for instance, he informed *Telegraph* readers that "chess fans" would soon have the chance to meet Garry Kasparov at the London Chess Centre, whose address he helpfully printed. What Pein forgot to mention is that he owns and manages the Centre. He also neglected to add that the primary purpose of Kasparov's visit was to promote chess computers for sale at Chess and Bridge Ltd — another of Pein's companies.

The *Eye* has often drawn attention to Pein's shameless slanting of *Telegraph* news reports to plug his own business address and further his commercial interests through product placement. Since he is still allowed to get away with it, we can only assume that *Telegraph* editor Charles Moore is quite happy with the arrangement.

RED faces at the *Telegraph & Argus* in multicultural Bradford, where the pisspoor rag has shelled out £13,000 compensation for race discrimination.

Claudia Baptiste, a black woman, was turned down for two advertising jobs at the paper having been told in her interview that black staff were known as "black bastards". The tribunal was deeply unimpressed by the newspaper's claim that the remarks were intended as a harmless joke.

There was also embarrassment for the Commission for Racial Equality, which last year awarded the paper its national Race In the Media award. Or was that the *Racism* in the Media award?

THE caring new approach of the revamped, renamed *The Express* can be neatly summed up by the antics of sensitive executive features editor Steve Martin.

Holidaying in Sweden, Martin was persuaded to visit Strindberg's home, a lovingly preserved national shrine. But after a night's heavy drinking, the *Express* hack suddenly found himself called very short — and finally managed to slip away from the reverential tour group to a toilet he had spotted earlier. There, he relieved himself mightily. But upon attempting to pull the chain, Martin discovered it was merely a replica.

The *Expressman* slunk back, only to discover the tour had turned to inspect the Strindbergian bog, now stinking foully. Fortunately this tale is almost certainly as true as other stories in *The Express*. Martin tells it himself.

***THE Insider*, edited by Tim "Desperate" Satchell, has now taken the title of World's Most Pathetic Magazine after the collapse of the cretinous *Dumpsters*.**

Poor old Satchell was boasting that he had a scoop: viz, Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, is emigrating to New Zealand. Sadly, he isn't. Well done, Tim. Will *The Insider* or *Punch* fold first?

MONEY UPDATE

TWO years after making a solemn pledge to its 1.5 million customers, the Alliance & Leicester building society has decided it has behaved honourably for long enough.

Without any public announcement or press release it has broken its promise to provide free postage to its National Giro customers. They were admitted under the Alliance & Leicester's umbrella when the building society bought the privatised National Giro, and a terse typed note on the bottom of account statements simply reveals that free postage is being phased out from the beginning of November.

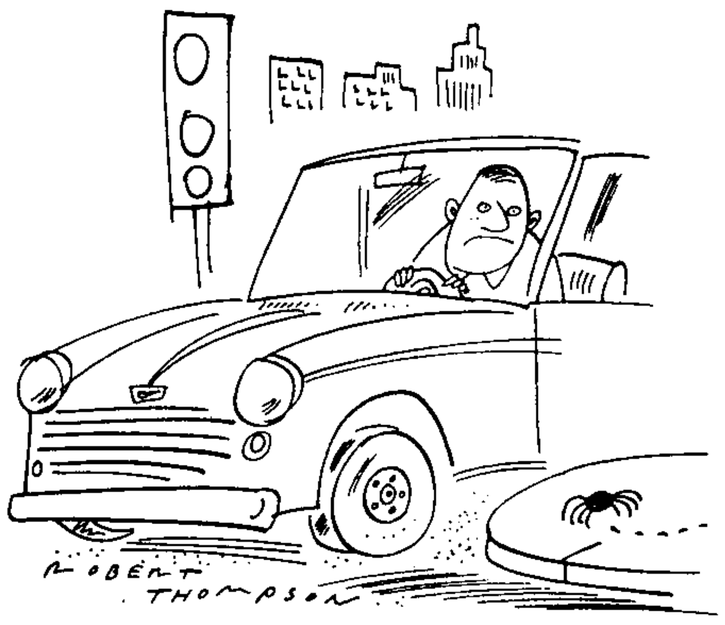
Ten million first-class prepaid envelopes worth £2,600,000 are used every year, and this was taken into account when National Giro was sold. At the time Giro customers received a letter from managing director Lewis J. Evans, stating: "The existing way you bank with us will not change. The services from Post Offices, the telephone service *and the free postage-paid envelopes* for transactions will remain."

ADVERTISING

PENSION bigwigs at General Accident should have heeded the words of high court judge Lord Wylie before choosing the actor who was to star in their current TV advertisement.

He is Gareth "Gilly" Gilchrist, a gun-toting heavy who was given 18 months for a "terrifying" armed raid on a frail pensioner in 1984. In sentencing Gilchrist — who also has a conviction for carrying a flick knife — his lordship said of the accused's criminal prowess: "It was the most inept performance one could imagine."

General Accident is not the only one to be taken in by the scar-faced thespian. Last year "Gilly" was axed from his role as a loving dad in a TV advert for Persil after he came clean about his murky past.



"Clean the flies off your windscreen, mate?"

TREVVIES*

"The moment of being, of existing in a part, is its own fine, pure moment. The actor's imagination and his whole body, heart and spirit just... *exist*. All the skill, all the sense of life and the sense of death run through him in that one moment. In one sense, it is as simple as throwing a stone and watching it bounce across the water." He stares down at the table once more. "That is acting at its best. At its worst, it can be horrendous"...

When offstage, he worries about being onstage. "I am never happy with what I have done. Who knows what is good? Once I have finished a take, I can say, 'Well, that felt all right. I tried all the things in that moment with as much knowledge, adventure, spontaneity and, yes, love, that I could'..."

RALPH FIENNES
Daily Telegraph

Submitted by E. Strobes

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

***formerly "Luvvies"**

HALLO! THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! QUEEN Brenda can relax: there will be nothing but harmless fluff in the Duchess of York's imminent "autobiography", *Freebie!*

For the Marquesa has learnt that Brenda's flame-haired former daughter-in-law has sold the serialisation rights to something called *Hello!* for the usual Gucci suitcase-load of used fivers.

Thus not only can there be nothing but candyfloss in Freebiana's "memoir", but the duchess is almost certain to be struck down shortly by an act of God — the curse of *Hello!*

Meanwhile Brenda's eldest, Brian, can also afford a brief sigh of relief: his former squeeze Jane Ward has decided not to go ahead with her own reminiscences (*Eyes passim*). It seems that her husband Andrew has come into some money, so for the moment they don't need the dosh.

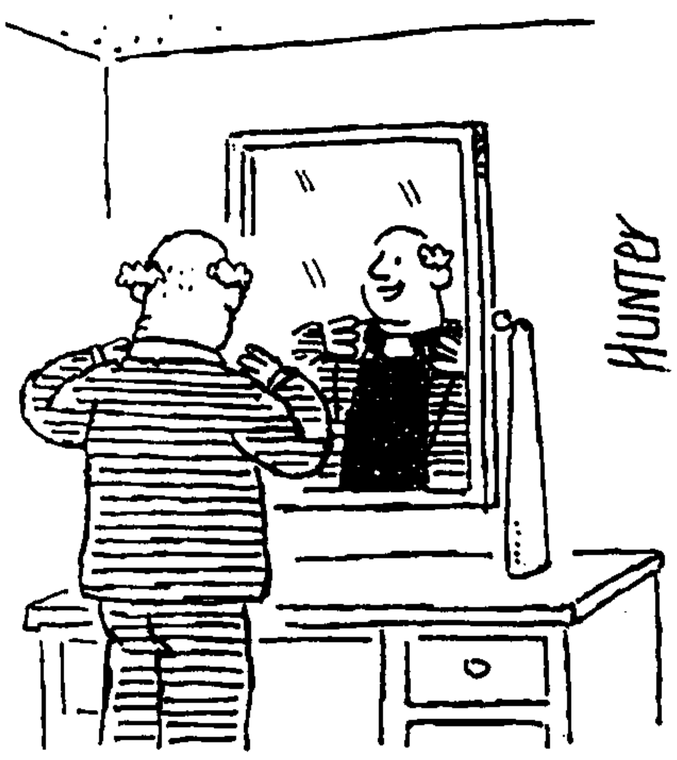
However, I am sad to hear that Jane is considering suing the *Sunday Mirror*, which printed a ripped-off synopsis of the proposed book. Even sadder, she is being advised in this by the voracious Peter Carter-Fuck. Apparently they plan to apply to Sir James Goldsmith for financial backing to mount the case.

I urge Sir Jammy to help out: it will be worth every penny. For Jane's objection to the *Mirror* story is that she and the Prince of Wales "didn't do it". It should be fun to hear the heir to the throne in the witness box specifying exactly what they did do in that grace and favour cottage in Windsor Park.

HALLO! WHY oh why does our brilliant home secretary believe private detectives have been hired to tag both himself and lovely David Mellor in the run up to the election?

Poor Michael Howard is convinced that my delightful zillionaire friend Sir James Goldfinger, inspired leader of the patriotic Referendum Party, is behind this imagined surveillance. Only last month Mellor paid £1,000 to have a security firm "sweep" his £1.3 million Docklands home for bugging devices. All very silly, and nothing was found. As if Sir Jammy, who is standing against Mellor in Putney, would ever countenance such a prank!

The Tories must get a grip of themselves and stop seeing the philanthropic Goldfish as some kind of fiendish Dr No figure.



"Another day, another collar"

HALLO! THE Duke of Edinburgh lets it be known he thinks the high command of the Anglican church is an absolute shower. So Philip will probably be hugely amused by the latest imbroglio involving his unpleasant protégé, the megalomaniac warden of St George's, Windsor, the religious "think thank" he founded.

Only last month Professor Richard Whitfield was forced to resign from the National Family Trust after accepting a freebie to a conference organized by the Moonies. Now I discover Whitfield has been invited to another right-wing jamboree in Prague next March — by the organization whose president was one of the bigwigs at the recent Moonie meet!

For the Prague jaunt, the only advertised UK "co-convener" is none other than the National Family Trust — which knows nothing about it whatsoever! Perhaps Whitfield will tell Philip, if no one else, what the hell he is playing at.

"Bad heir day, darling?"

HALLO! *DEBRETT's Peerage* take note: my very grand literary friend, publisher and agent Christopher Sinclair-Stevenson, has inherited a title! This should more than make up for some of Christopher's business disappointments, including his own abortive publishing venture, which rather, er, sank.

"It's an Argentinean title, actually," Christopher's wife Deborah confides. "From his father's great-uncle. Not a title one is allowed to use in England." Pity. Sounds perfect: Baron Belgrano.

HALLO! *WILL the gentlemen at the Sun please stop ringing the Marquesa? She is not in the market for revenge stories about the Mirror after the Sun's humiliation over the hoax Diana video.*

Firstly, I do not want to hear again that Sheryl, Gazza's battered bride, once had an affair with Mirror editor Piers "Boy" Morgan. OK, "Shezza" did secretly ring Piers to tip him off about her injuries. But this does not prove any impropriety. So far it proves only that the Sun is annoyed not to have got the story first.

Secondly, could they stop telling me that Ulster's finest son, millionaire David Montgomery, always labelled a joyless, hatchet-faced destroyer, has a throbbing, passionate nature? The story concerning Rommel breaking a glass shower booth in a frenzy of watery passion is clearly rubbish.

'The Marquesa'

IN THE TEAROOM

WHY has the shadow foreign secretary Robin Cook ruled out joining a single currency on the due starting date in 1999? Is Labour as divided on this issue as the Tories? Is the wily Cook out to pick a fight with his old enemy, the pro-Europe Gordon Brown? No: for once the ginger gnome is behaving himself — and acting out his part in a conspiracy hatched in the leader's office.

Some time ago the party's number crunchers delivered the distressing news that, by one of those awkward ironies that bedevil British politics, Sir Jams Goldsmith's Referendum party was picking up more support from regular Labour voters than from Tories.

Labour's policy wonks went swiftly into action drawing up position papers and reams of analysis. What could it mean? Are Labour voters congenitally even more ignorant and gullible than Conservatives? Does Sir Jams's exotic lifestyle hold an unexpected resonance with voters whose brains have been softened by reading too many pap celebrity features? These possibilities were too hideous to contemplate, so it was decided that regular Labour voters were smart people who had wisely realised that a single currency might cost them their jobs.

But what to do about it? A dramatic soundbite was scripted for Tony Blair — one that would echo Margaret Thatcher's famous Bruges speech and throw the Tories into turmoil: "New Labour does not intend to roll back the frontiers of unemployment in Britain to see it reintroduced by the backdoor in Frankfurt."

The trouble was Tony Blair couldn't bring himself to say it. He was afraid of upsetting Uncle Helmut Kohl. So it was decided that Labour's reluctance to sign up to the single currency would be announced by its new "special envoy" in Europe, the diplomat Sir Michael Butler. He duly did the business. The problem was: hardly anyone noticed. Most of the media had decided that Sir Michael was just another old Establishment booby cosying up to "new" Labour before the election in the hope of a plum job afterwards and didn't think it worth reporting what he had to say. Someone we'd all heard of was needed to say it all again a bit more loudly. Robin Cook didn't hesitate to volunteer.

'Urquhart'

SCOTTISH secretary Michael Forsyth is fighting for the Union, he reminded colleagues at the Tory party conference. "It is our responsibility as Conservatives and Unionists," he thundered, "to defend the Union and our British identity by meeting the forces of disintegration head on and putting them to rout."

In fact Mr Forsyth himself is expected to be the routed one in his Stirling constituency. His majority over Labour is a perilous 703. But his time in Scotland has not been unprofitable — from a personal point of view, anyway.

In 1983, when he first became an MP, he bought a small country estate for £151,000. Up until 1994 he was quite happy to keep it. But in that year he sold off part of the estate for £370,000, then another part for £67,500 — and last month he sold off some more for £53,000. This leaves him with a smaller house which he could easily sell off — if he ever had to give up fighting for the Union.

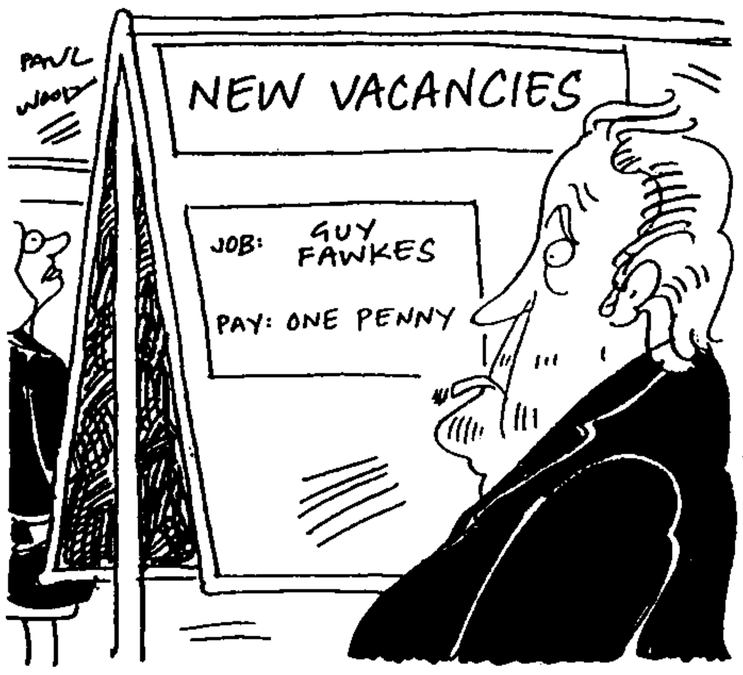
In the meantime Forsyth is happy to return the Stone of Destiny to Scotland and has decided to put it in Edinburgh Castle for "security reasons". This followed long consultation with the nearest contender, Scone Palace, from where the Stone was stolen by Edward I. Michael forgot to mention that the Stone will be placed in an area of Edinburgh Castle owned by his Scottish office which, unlike Scone Palace, is a private estate. He also failed to mention that Scots will have to pay £5.50 to see the lump of sandstone. Presumably the money will go to the... Scottish Office. It costs £4 to see the Stone at Westminster Abbey.

DASHING Gwilym Jones, under-secretary of state for Wales, is recovering after a horrific episode in Hong Kong where he was arrested for "shoplifting".

The diminutive minister led a trade mission to Taiwan, and was returning through HK airport when he was arrested outside the duty free shop by an overzealous inspector — who accused him of attempting to make off with a £100 suitcase!

A terrible misunderstanding. Jones had merely "done an Archer" — unknowingly left the appropriate area with unpaid goods.

While his colleagues caught the flight home, Jones was forced to remain, on bail, till the following morning. A local beak promptly found the minister not guilty, sympathizing that the duty free area was dreadfully confusing.



RON DAVIES, MP for Caerphilly and shadow secretary of state for Wales, often berates the Tories for the way they use quangos to rule Wales. He argues that a Welsh assembly is needed to overcome such an undemocratic system.

Maybe Ron has been talking to his election agent, Elwyn Morgan, about the iniquities of quangos. Mr Morgan knows a bit about them as he earns £1,765 a year for one day a month on the Staff Commission for Wales — which is a lot less than when he first started the job two years ago earning £9,472 for one and a half days a week.

Morgan also sits as a non-executive director of the University Hospital of Wales NHS trust, for which he receives another £5,000 a year for two days' work a month.

THE prospective Tory candidate in Colchester is Stephan Shakespeare, a teacher and so-called education expert who writes in the *Mail on Sunday* and *Daily Mail*, most recently on "Why it's time for a dose of discipline".

Locally he has been trumpeting the fact that all but one of Colchester's secondary schools have grant maintained status and, he noted, "they are zooming up the league table".

The sole local authority-run school, Lord Thomas Audley, felt that by inference Shakespeare was suggesting it was of a lower standard — which will have been news to the Ofsted inspectors who visited the school earlier in the year and gave it a glowing report.

Even more embarrassing for local Tories is that one of the praise-giving inspectors was Thomas Shephard, husband of Tory education secretary Gillian. Surely Colchester Tories are not suggesting he got it wrong?

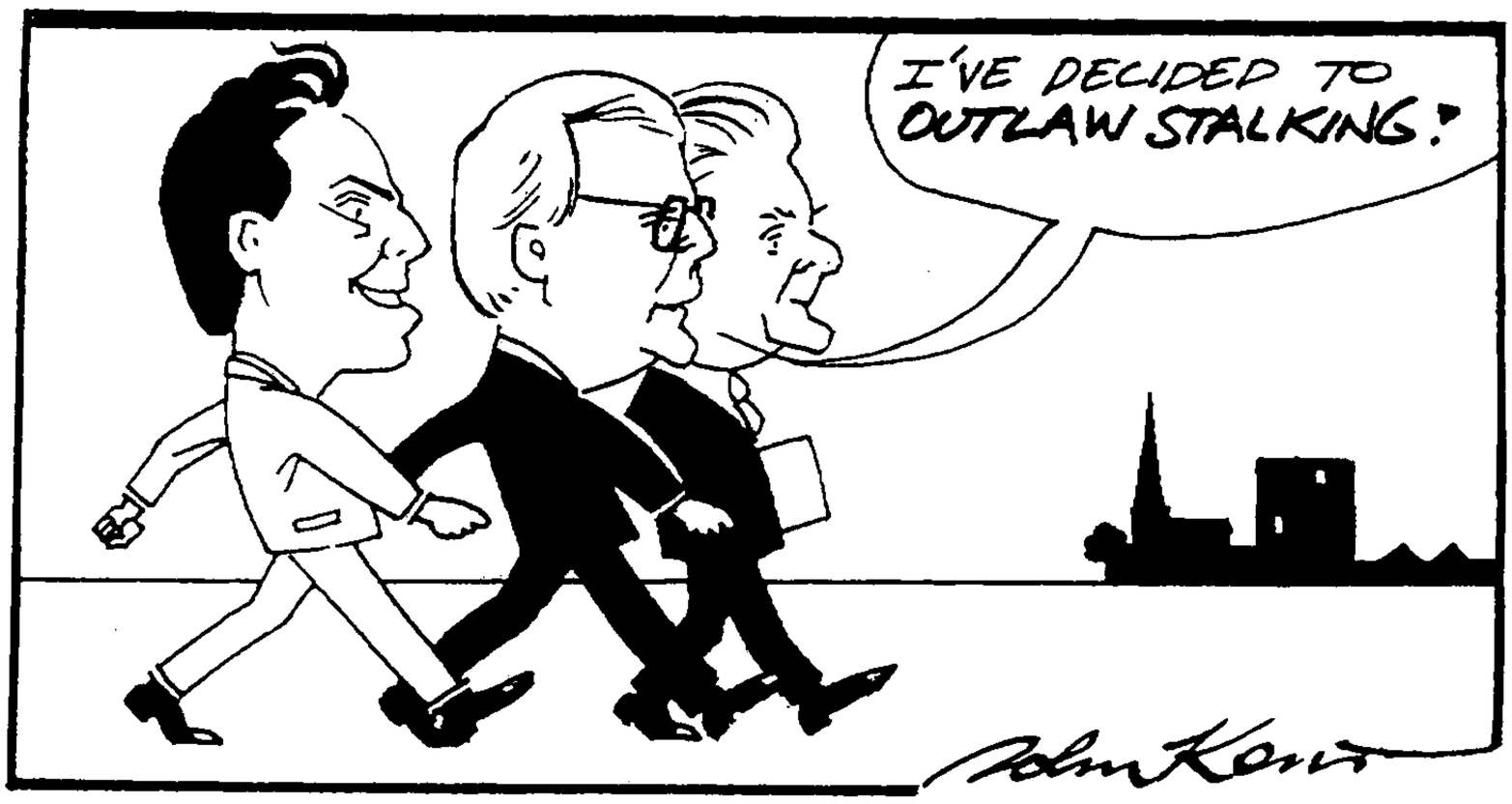
WHAT has happened to Harvey Proctor, the former Tory MP for Billericay who left the Commons after a fuss over rent boys and went into the shirtlifting (*"fitting", shurely?*) business?

Companies House has been sending out reminders every six weeks to Proctor's shirt company, Cottonrose Limited, which has apparently failed to file accounts. It had until January 1996 to register them and obey Companies House rules. It is now in danger of incurring late filing penalties — or eventually being struck off the register.

Proctor's last accounts showed some miserable losses, but there can be no excuse for sloppy accounting. Perhaps one of his shareholders can help? These include Michael Heseltine, deputy PM and former president of the board of trade; Philip Oppenheim, exchequer secretary at the treasury; and two real financial pros: the bankrupt MP turned wealthy novelist Lord Anglia of Weston-Super-Mare, and the king of sleaze himself, disgraced former trade minister, Neil Harrods.

'Backbiter'

EDUCATION NEWS



BARONESS Blackstone, master of London University's Birkbeck College and a Labour spokesperson in the Lords, recently announced that it was wrong to fund colleges by extracting money from "rich contacts or reptilian businessmen who want to make their companies respectable".

This was curious: Tessa Blackstone has more to do with "reptilian businessmen" than most.

In Birkbeck's business studies department she has attracted a media chair funded by Rupert Murdoch's News International. And in the school of politics and sociology she has overseen a chair funded by Nestlé — Nestlé being well known for its high pressure selling of baby milk powder in the third world where the absence of sterile water and the poverty of mothers tempted away from breast feeding makes their product particularly undesirable. Incredibly, the Nestlé-funded chair is in the "politics of development".

No "rich contacts or reptilian businessmen"? Pull the other one.

NOOKS and CORNERS

PEVENSEY BAY, where William the Conqueror landed in 1066, used to be a charming long sandy beach. Now it is being slowly washed away, partly because the timber groynes have not been kept in repair. So what is being done about it?

Well, the new Environment Agency has come up with a bold scheme to beat the sea which will cost a mere £40 million. In addition to replacing the wooden groynes — which the agency admits might well do the job by themselves — it also wants to dump huge quantities of shingle on the beach and to construct 23 "T-Head structures" in the sea every 300 metres out of lumps of rock. These will be visible above the water for much of the time, will be marked so that ships will not hit them, and will be altogether obtrusive and hideous.

So much for Pevensey Bay as an unassuming beach for old-fashioned seaside holidays. But why is the beach now being washed away after many centuries of stability? The sea, of course, can be unpredictable; but things only began to go wrong when Tarmac constructed a marina at Langley Point over to the west. That this development would cause erosion and affect Pevensey Bay was predicted, and Tarmac only received permission to build the wretched thing by agreeing to pass on material which collects in a dredged channel. But this is not done, and now the company claims the situation has changed.

Surely the most economical, sensible — and least damaging — method of dealing with the erosion of Pevensey Bay is to remove Tarmac's hideous marina. Has the Environment Agency considered that?

***MY PICTURE** is a charming painting by Cyril Katkov entitled The Cutty Sark. If the London borough of Greenwich has its way, all the elegant little Regency houses on the left hand side which act as such a suitable foil to the historic clipper will soon be demolished.*

As I described in Eyes 905 and 907, the Labour-controlled borough is in an unholy alliance with a dubious consortium of developers and is set on sweeping away a large chunk of the centre of Greenwich bounded by Church Street, Creek Road, Welland Street and Thames Street. This includes buildings which date back to the 17th century.

The ostensible reason for the devastation is construction of "Cutty Sark" station on the proposed Docklands light railway extension. But a station here was not originally planned as there is to be one at Greenwich High Road not far away. Cutty Sark station is really only for tourists. Nor does its construction require the demolition of so much property, but a tawdry new shopping centre on the site is the only way it can be paid for under the present dispensation.

A local hero is Mr Roger Barker from Woolwich, who asked for an injunction to restrain the council in Woolwich county court, arguing that the local authority had not responded to local requests or to English Heritage's request to hold a public inquiry before demolition commences. On 15 October the judge concluded that the case was not in his jurisdiction and that Mr Barker should go to the high court, but it is interesting that the judge awarded costs of a mere £300 and the council's legal advisers were rattled.

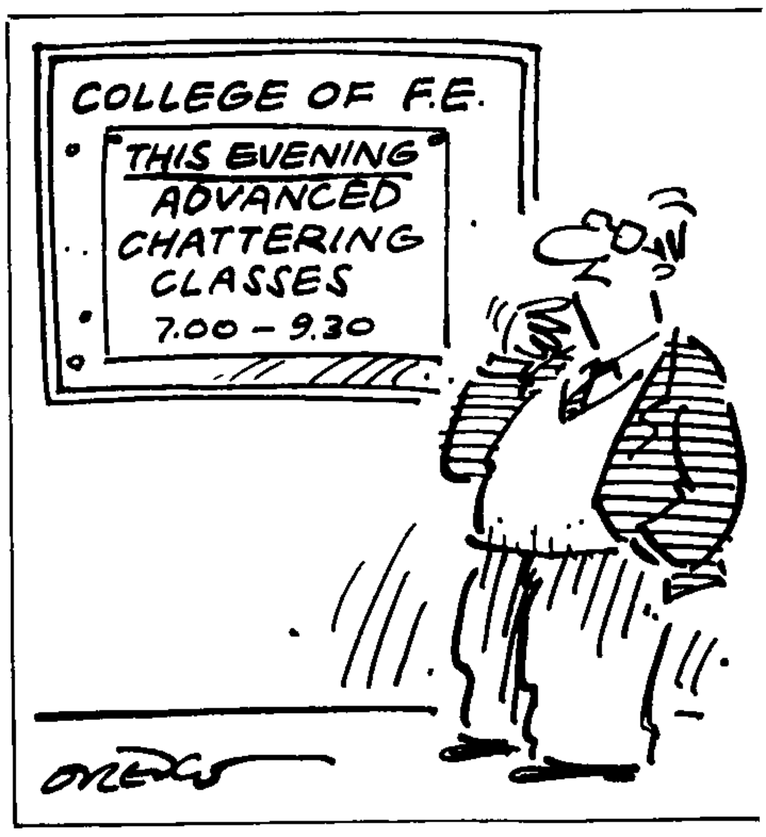
Having got rid of the tiresome tenants from Walrond House, the council is now starting demolition of the property it owns. Now it can grant itself conservation area consent for further demolition even before a detailed planning application has been submitted, which goes against the whole spirit of historic building legislation. But the council, of course, has a financial stake in redevelopment, so nothing must stand in its way. Meanwhile compulsory purchase orders have been made for the remaining properties. These have to be confirmed by the secretary of state. Mr Gummer would do better to call in this cynical and wretched business for public inquiry before the historic centre of Greenwich is irretrievably wrecked.

IN THE last issue Mr Peter Cox, chairman of the Sheringham Lifeboat Museum steering committee, objected to my article in *Eye* 908 and insisted that English Heritage declined to list the old sheds which stand in the way of his whizzy new museum and that these "buildings do not represent any uniqueness in respect of surviving buildings associated with the local fishing industry".

Just for the record, an inspector has written that "the sheds are certainly of local historic and architectural interest and might well be included in a local list — if there was one... English Heritage considers the buildings to be of considerable importance to the conservation area, regardless of their listing status." While the department of national heritage has written about Scotters Shed that "research has shown that it is probably a unique survivor of a fishermen's shed of this size in a longshore fishing situation on this part of the North Norfolk Coast". So there.

The question remains: why should real historic maritime structures be destroyed to make way for mediocre new "heritage"?

'Piloti'



Pseuds Corner

I am the most religious man you'll ever meet. Positively spurting with messianic enthusiasms, but like an unmanned yacht I'll tack back and forth upon the most unreasonable winds. It's always been this way. The oblique issues of a semi-educated mind transported partially on lust, whole-heartedly on pure go-go, invisibly clasping a manifesto of half-chewed pellets of knowledge, combined with hairy strings of technicolour imagination.

DAVID BOWIE
Daily Telegraph

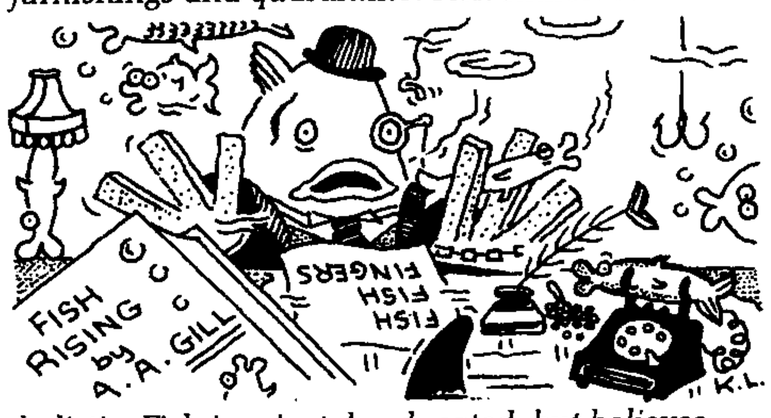
LINDA MONTANO
DISENGAGING ATTACHMENT: THE CHAKRAS
Linda Montano, author of Art in Everyday Life, makes durational performance pieces, such as her famous action in 1983 in which she was tied with an eight foot rope for a year to Korean artist Teching Hseih.

ICA October Bulletin

KAGAN, Gaby, 24. I declare an invested social interest in reifying Fabian dialectic that impinges upon collective conscience to effect the transformation of real lives. I therefore undertake to promote the pursuit of disinterested truth, to this end, in the knowledge that what's valuable about our intellectual endeavours is the bare fact of enquiry and its empowering content thereof.

Young Fabian Executive Committee Candidates

Fish isn't a course between soup and roast anymore; it's a style choice. Fish is the way we feel about ourselves. Fish is concerned, caring and wears five-button suits. Fish is Eurosceptic about currency and passports, but Europhile about soft furnishings and quarantine. Fish smiles. Fish is



holistic. Fish is privately educated, but believes fundamentally in universal preschool nursery education. Fish is for equal-opportunity acupuncture. Fish is coming home. Fresh Labour, fresh fish.

A.A. GILL
Sunday Times

HENRY W. SULLIVAN: *The Beatles With Lacan: Rock 'n' Roll as Requiem for the Modern Age*
The Beatles were the most significant cultural phenomenon of their time, but what exactly did they signify? Using a psychoanalytic approach, The Beatles with Lacan attempts to answer this still relevant question. It argues that Beatlemania and the music of Lennon/McCartney highlighted the end of the Modern Age as it had been expressed in the ideals of the Enlightenment. The albums from Revolver (1966) to Abbey Road (1969) are seen collectively as the first popular post-modern classic of western music, and the Beatles themselves as cultural pioneers of enduring achievement.

Publisher's announcement

Me in love with Andrew, adoring, besotted. The big perversity, the epic provocation, the ultimate insult against nature. And — whisper if you dare — the bigots are right. It is unnatural. Bloody ridiculous, really...

And I'm staring at what I've just written, and I don't much detect a point. The real point is lying here beside me and looking at him once more, and once again. I find words, as usual, superfluous.

JOHN LYTTLE
Independent

CONTRIBUTORS: Everyone, S. Webb, P. Strange, G. Cohen, A. Non, V. Baughan.

£10 paid for entries

TV

Beck (BBC1)

IF YOU have ever wondered why you don't watch as much television as you used to, the answer may be a series like Beck.

There have been many series like *Beck*, and there will be many more to come. But at this precise moment, in the midst of a supposedly glittering autumn schedule, it seems bizarre that the BBC couldn't come up with something a little less shopworn. Terrifyingly derivative, wildly unconvincing and downbeat to the point of coma, *Beck* embodies all that is wrong with popular television drama.

Beck is, of course, a detective. It is customary for all new detective shows to insist that their detective isn't an ordinary detective like all the other detectives who aren't ordinary detectives either, and indeed *Beck* plods what in TV terms is a previously unplodded beat. Working out of King's Cross (cue moody street lights and slightly seedy jazz soundtrack), she hunts down missing persons and runaways, the dispossessed and the disappeared.

In more innocent times this would have been called "the idea", but any novelty it has to offer is swiftly smothered by a format that offers only echoes of older and better shows. Beck has a turbulent love life, like every other detective of the past thirty years. She has only one name, like about half of them. She has a racially diverse team of willing helpers, none of whom is quite as bright as she is. And she makes mistakes, usually very big mistakes, because she is wilful and stroppy and because otherwise nothing much would happen in between her inevitable triumphs.

Along the way she meets some real characters, or failing that stereotypes masquerading as characters. Following the lead of all previous downbeat detective series, every minor character talks far too much while explaining the plot, before offering up a soft little line from which Beck can launch her next quip. It's what you might call "broad brush" drama, although you'd have trouble finding a brush as broad as this.

Beck has one other unusual habit, which isn't so much a characteristic as one of those ingenious Party Quirks from *Whose Line Is It Anyway*. She eats far too much, and all the time, and never puts on a gram of weight. In last week's episode we saw her doing some perfunctory aerobics at the local gym. Considering how much she puts away, weekly liposuction would be a more realistic explanation.

But then, like so many of these series, *Beck* wants to be acknowledged as gritty and realistic without having to go to the bother of actually being either of these things. Last week she and her helpers tracked down a young woman who had fled from her husband and small baby. Both woman and husband were unreasonably beautiful and, although they spoke in Nawf Lunnun accents, they lived in a beautiful Marylebone mews house of a type even Arab sheiks would struggle to afford. Meanwhile Beck was having to sell a sculpture to make ends meet — just as every private detective has to from time to time.

As you'd expect, Amanda Redman gives a good, strong, feisty performance as Beck — but then Amanda Redman is probably the only reason Beck exists in the first place. Series like this do not beg to be made. The star comes first, and then the series is created around her. If *Beck* is so wearily familiar, it's because ever more television is created in this way. Phillip Schofield's various shows on Carlton do not exist because someone had a great idea which they wanted to make into a series. They exist because Carlton signed up Phillip Schofield for millions of pounds and desperately needs something for him to do. Stars drive TV, ideas no longer matter, viewers switch off.

The tragedy is that *Beck* isn't the worst of these shows. In many ways it's quite a professional piece of work, and some scenes would even be moving if you hadn't seen them a thousand times before. But while TV drama is beholden to stars, such shows will continue to be made. Latest news is that Michael French, the excellent David Wicks from *EastEnders*, is to be given his own series. He's playing a detective. Can't wait.

'Couch Potato'

"The correct answer was 'No, we don't need another quiz show' — so that's five points to the other team"

MEDIA NEWS

THE positive discrimination policies governing BBC traineeships are going from strength to strength.

Two years ago, in *Eye* 854, we revealed that one lucky recipient of a traineeship was Lisa Roberts — whose dad, Roy Roberts, is the BBC's "head of centre" in Plymouth, whatever that may mean.

Now another talented youngster, Matthew Roberts, has completed his BBC training scheme and has been offered a staff job at Radio Stoke — something almost unheard-of these days, since most recruits are forced to accept short-term contracts. Although young Matthew has a serious speech impediment, this is clearly no obstacle to a successful career as an on-air reporter.

Matthew's dad, Roy Roberts (for it is he), must be proud indeed.

JOHN BIRT's grandiose plan to cram the BBC's radio, television and World Service hacks into the same newsroom in west London has run into a spot of bother.

As the builders' scaffolding comes away from the newly completed addition to the sprawling Television Centre — known as the "lean-to" — it has become blindingly obvious it is far too small. A third of its space is taken up by a fashionable but useless "atrium", and what is left won't even accommodate the several tons of computers which are to fire up the multi-million pound nerve centre of the new millennium.

Nikki "louder" Clark, the noisy apparatchik charged with planning the move to this temple of "bi-medialism", is distraught. Radio news hacks who have declared they will not desert their comfortable nest in the West End for the wilderness of Shepherd's Bush, are jubilant.

But their rejoicing may be premature. John Birt has a brilliant scheme for coping with the staff for whom there is no room in his lean-to: the sack. Another 150 compulsory redundancies are on the way for the dwindling band of unhappy hacks in his news and current affairs "directorate".

MORALITY CORNER

FOOTBALL sentimentality clashed with the new morality in the media this week when the BBC's *Match of The Day* kicked off coverage of the Chelsea-Spurs match with pictures of Matthew Harding's wife Ruth in the directors' box.

She was named WOMAN OF THE DAY, and the BBC had clearly decided that even an estranged wife was more appropriate for a recently canonised footballing saint than a live-in lovely called Vicky Jaramillo. This treatment left the soccer-mad *Mirror* and *Sun* with egg on their faces: their saccharine sentimentalists had ignored Ruth in their haste to write syrupy drivel about the sorrow of Jaramillo.

The *Mirror*'s "exclusive" carried a front page picture of Matthew and Vicky beside the heading: I THOUGHT OUR LOVE WOULD LAST FOREVER — I WAS WRONG. The *Sun*'s front page had the same picture and the more mundane: I LOVED HIM SO MUCH. Both papers quoted in full Auden's poem "Stop All The Clocks", which was turned into an everlasting cliché by the film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*.

JUST FANCY THAT!

CAMELOT: [kamlo] s.m. a) Cheap Jack, street hawker; b) Newsvendor.

CAMELOTE: [kamlot] s.f. cheap goods; shoddy goods; trash; rubbish; junk; etc.

— From Harrap's French and English Dictionary

I HAD MY FIRST LEGAL EXPERIENCE WHEN I WAS TWENTY-ONE...
All Rise for Julian Clary
BEFORE THAT THEY WERE ALL CRIMINAL ACTS
AND THIS IS ANOTHER ONE

I-BSkyB

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

CONTRIBUTOR: G. Powe.

The Sun

ENTHUSIASTIC health hacks at the *Daily Mail* should perhaps write about the risks suffered by their colleagues on the cable station Channel One.

Journalists and production staff there have been complaining about the editing suites, situated in a basement adjoining an underground car park. They believe car exhaust fumes are seeping into the air conditioning and giving them headaches, but all their complaints have been ignored.

Now that an editor has collapsed and been taken to hospital after complaining of the fumes, hacks at the pisspoor station are waiting to see if tight-fisted managers will be driven to do something.

"Your occupation – cab driver"

ITN's claims to editorial independence have sustained a further body-blow since the notorious "over-friendly" John Major interview on *News at Ten* a few weeks ago.

This time the offender is the small-fry *Big Breakfast* news team, who received an hysterical early-morning phone call from Charlie Parsons, the man in charge of the show, demanding changes in the running order of news items on 15 October. He highlighted one particular story he regarded as "un-newsworthy", despite the ITN hacks' view to the contrary.

Oddly enough it concerned latest developments in the increasingly ugly Paula Yates/Bob Geldof dispute — the seizure of "certain substances" at the Chelsea home of Ms Yates and the ghastly Aussie pop-star Michael Hutchence.

Was Parsons gallantly seeking to spare Paula, a former *Big Breakfast* presenter, from embarrassment? Apparently not. What disturbed him was her suggestion — included in the original ITN script — that "the drugs were planted and she's ready to name names". Unfortunately, he had left it too late to have this "spiked" from the 7 o'clock bulletin, where it ran as lead story, but it promptly disappeared from the rest of the day's news reports.

FACT: The production company responsible for the *Big Breakfast* is Planet 24 — whose board of directors, by an amazing coincidence, happens to include Bob Geldof.

BBC radio staff in Cleveland have found a way to get through those long, dull evenings in their Middlesbrough office: long, expensive calls to premium rate 0898 numbers.

An internal newsletter has pleaded with staff to "stamp out this seedy practice", but to no avail. Apart from mundane calls to *Radio Times* ticket giveaway lines, the letter reports "Services used by Radio Cleveland people include Love-Line, Gay to Gay, Virgo Horoscope and Hollywood Gossip".

HACKWATCH: MORALITY PLAY

THE new all-party crusade for moral revival is, naturally enough, being led by the Murdoch press. Frances Lawrence's "manifesto" first appeared in *The Times*, whose owner has done so much to promote high moral standards in this country. But it is the *Sun* that has now taken the lead.

"The gun culture is not just about weapons with real bullets," it announced on 21 October. "It's also about what we watch on TV and at the cinema... We must wean our society off violence." A day later, the paper carried a long editorial sermon about the undermining of family values. "Is it any wonder there is so much drug-taking, drinking, swearing and loutishness?"

The culprits were politicians — whose support for Mrs Lawrence "would carry more weight if their voices had been heard 15 or 20 years ago, when the damage was done. Where were they when their country needed them? Let us pray it is not too late for them to jump on to the bandwagon of decency."

The *Sun*'s own commitment to decency and decorum has been only too apparent in recent months:

6 June: "Telly stunner Samantha Janus has lifted the lid on her sizzling sex life — boasting 'I'm 10 out of 10 in bed.' Samantha, 23 — star of TV comedies *Pie in the Sky* and *Game On* — is also set to amaze fans with a series of raunchy poses for a men's magazine." The *Sun* helpfully reproduces a couple of the raunchier poses. It also notes, without any hint of disapproval, that she has admitted to taking cocaine.

10 June: "Men love former Gladiator Nikki Diamond's bouncy new boobs — but not half as much as she does. Nikki, who won an army of fans as tough Scorpio on the hit ITV show, says: 'I love flaunting them'." Purely in the interests of decency, the *Sun* is happy to oblige.

13 June: "Now this is what we call a football strip!" To mark Euro 96 the *Sun* carries a two-page spread of Page 3 girls baring their boobs. Meanwhile the TV page previews the delights available on Sky Movies Gold (prop: R. Murdoch). These include *No Way To Treat a Lady* (about "a woman-hater with a mother fixation and a talent for impersonation who strangles a number of middle-aged women") and *The Virgin Spring* ("the lives of a peaceful farming family are shattered when their daughter is raped and killed").

15 June: Stepping up its campaign against loutishness, the *Sun* prints several poems about the forthcoming England-Scotland football match. A sample: "On Saturday we face the cheeky Scots,/From start to end we'll kick their bots."

18 June: Eager as ever to promote family values, the paper carries a salivating two-page feature about the joys of Club 18-30 holidays. "Alex Leavy reckons he has the sexiest, sunniest job in the world," it begins. "He's paid for partying all day, downing 30 bottles of beer a night — and the stunning women who throw themselves at him are just a perk of the job."

29 June: "Moore Blimey! These are the first snaps of Demi Moore in her new film *Striptease* — and she looks in strip-top form." **11 July:** Anything on telly tonight? You bet. Sky's Movie Channel offers *Kalifornia* (about "a twisted murderer who is littering the landscape with corpses"), followed by *Killer Looks* ("thriller about an over-adventurous young couple whose sex games backfire on them").

8 August: A two-page preview of the "treats in store" on television this autumn. One of the biggest "telly turn-ons" will be *Kiss and Tell*, an ITV drama "loosely based on the real-life story of Rachel Nickell murder suspect Colin Stagg".

15 August: To celebrate the new football season, the *Sun* displays its own "stunning squad" — nine topless Page 3 girls.

16 August: Steve Wright gives a rave review to Jack Nicholson's "unmissable" new film, in which the star "decides to take the law into his own hands" and kill his daughter's murderer.

30 August: A bumper evening's viewing. On Sky Movies, you can watch *Kickboxer III: The Art of War*. Sky Movie Channel has *Three Ninjas Kick Back* as well as *Bloodlust: Subspecies III*. Sky Movies Gold, by way of variety, offers *Nightmare on Elm Street* — "ground-breaking shocker, with the monstrous Freddie Kruger's first outing into the dreams of terrified teenagers".

13 September: Steve Wright drools over another new movie, *A Time to Kill*: "A 10-year-old black girl is raped and beaten by two white thugs in the wilds of Mississippi. Her father (Samuel L. Jackson) takes revenge by shooting them dead... All in all, *A Time to Kill* is excellent."

19 September: The *Sun* prints a page of gags by "saucy Cornish comic Jethro". For example: "Alcohol killed my wife. I came gome drunk and shot her dead." Boom boom!

1 October: Still striving valiantly against loutishness, the *Sun* invites readers to ring in with their verdict on the big question: "Who would you rather date... Fergie or a goat?"

7 October: The *Sun* begins a week-long serialisation of *Biting the Bullet*, the memoirs of an SAS wife. This delightful celebration of sex and violence kicks off with the headline: "I welcomed Ian home with a flash of my sexy undies in the car park."

8 October: *Sun* readers are alerted to another evening of wholesome movie-viewing on Murdoch's Sky channels: *The Bait* ("three young Parisians resort to cold-blooded murder to finance their dream of opening a chain on clothes shops in America"); *City Cops* ("an American cop meets her match in the violent Hong Kong underworld"); *Sudden Impact* ("Dirty Harry takes on a serial murder case involving a woman seeking revenge on her rapists"); *Valley of the Dolls* ("cult film centred around Hollywood women and their heavy drug dependency"); *Out of Annie's Past* ("a New York art gallery owner goes on the run after the Mob murder her lover"); and *The River Wild* ("Exciting adventure thriller. A woman goes with her son and estranged husband on a white-water rafting holiday, which turns to nightmare when they are kidnapped by two dangerous criminals"). Meanwhile, today's extract from the SAS wife's book is headed: "I said one wrong word and Ian smashed my head into the wall."

15 October: A heart-warming news story, headed "WIN OR BUST!", reveals that pool-player Matthew Mullin, a father of four, "went all to pot in a vital game — when a curvy rival flashed her boobs at him."

22 October: Sky's Movie Channel delivers the goods once again, as the *Sun* TV page proudly informs us. Tonight's highlights are *Confessions of a Pop Performer* ("British sex comedy. A Seventies rocker gets lots of practice taking his flares on and off"); and *Rosie Dixon Night Nurse* ("sex comedy in which dizzy Rosie Dixon applies to become a nurse"). Those who disapprove of films promoting sexual promiscuity can take refuge in *Judgment Night* — a "nightmarish action drama" in which "four young blokes venture into the wrong part of town while driving to a major boxing match, and fall foul of a ruthless gang leader".

Nightmarish indeed; and, as the *Sun* has so rightly pointed out, it is all the politicians' fault. Let us pray it is not too late for them to follow Rupert Murdoch's noble example.

"Hello, Mrs Turner – can Michael come out on the piss today?"

DOING THE ROUNDS

FUNDHOLDING SPECIAL

DR J.E. CARTY, consultant rheumatologist and chairman of the medical advisory committee at Lincoln and Louth NHS trust, has sent a revealing letter to all local GPs.

"For sometime there has been a developing inequality between the services we provide to (non-fundholding) GPs through the Lincolnshire health contract and those to GP fundholders. Whilst there is no difference in the treatment and clinical decisions we make about patients, the access time for surgery is now a cause for great concern. There were many worries when GP fundholding was established that there would be a two tier system; that certainly exists and in fact we have a several tier system, with some fundholders seeking non urgent surgery within three months and most within the 9-12 months range. For non-fundholders we only guarantee the Patients' Charter Standards of 15 months for hips, knees and cataracts, and 18 months for everything else.

"To give an example, one of my colleagues has undertaken the sterilisation and removal of a coil for a fundholder patient who has been waiting no more than 6 weeks, but is not able to give treatment to a Lincolnshire health patient with a fibroid uterus and debilitating heavy periods until mid 1997. This is unsettling and causing professional concern. We wish to treat patients on the basis of clinical need and not by virtue of the accident of where they live and the practice they are signed up with. This is a National Health Service funded by universal taxation."

Unfortunately things look set to get even more inequitable for non-fundholding patients in Lincoln. Last year, the hospital did far more work than the health authority paid for and is having to recoup the money by a "major reduction in the volume of non-urgent surgery" this year.

● **HUDDERSFIELD** is one of the few areas in the country where GPs haven't buckled under the pressure to become fundholders, with just 20 percent of the population covered by the scheme. Allan Templeton and Tony Keighley, chairman and chief executive of **Calderdale and Kirlies health authority**, have been putting pressure on Huddersfield GPs to become fundholders, however, even though the patients the authority purchases care for would suffer as a result. In a letter to non-fundholding GPs they write: "We would ask you to review your position and consider carefully the benefits of fundholding which become available to you and your patients when you have direct control of the healthcare budget for your practice population. We are personally undertaking a planned programme of visits to all GPs in our patch... and will take the opportunity to discuss the benefits of fundholding in all its forms."

As one Huddersfield GP responded: "GPs are being unfairly pressured by right wing civil servants. Most GPs see fundholding as a short-term way for them to line their own pockets by using savings to improve or extend their services, increasing the personal capital assets that they will realise when they retire. I think it's immoral, unethical and a scandalous waste of taxpayers' money. It is helping to fragment and destroy the NHS and its basic tenet of equal access for all."

The wisdom of the Huddersfield approach is evident elsewhere in the country, where an increasing number of fundholders has meant that budgets have been cut back and many are slipping into debt. **Warwickshire** fundholders are running up an overspend of £3 million, a third of which has been paid off by the health authority with money which was meant to benefit all GPs. The fundholders have been told to claw back the rest by slowing down their referrals but, if a patient were to suffer from the increased wait, the doctors themselves could face legal action. Such are the beauties of managing your own budget.

● PROFESSOR Sir David Goldberg, from **London's Institute of Psychiatry**, is also unsure of the benefits of fundholding for the mentally ill. "We lean over backwards to provide a better service to fundholding practices because we need all the work we can get. It is a hopeless model for

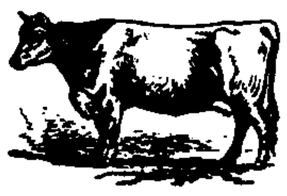
services and the severely mentally ill are not the beneficiaries."

● MANAGERS at **North Staffordshire hospital** have delighted nurses by banning them from the staff restaurant at weekends while allowing doctors to eat there. The trust wanted to close the restaurant to all as a cost-cutting measure, but doctors have a clause in their contracts insisting that meals are laid on during shifts. No such luck for nurses, some of whom have been "physically stopped" by managers and caterers from entering. As manager Roger Read put it: "This situation will only last until the new delivery service is launched. Then the restaurant will close completely at weekends."

● **NORTH DURHAM acute hospitals NHS trust** is set to reduce services to survive a £2 million debt. Those under threat include breast cancer screening (saving £480,000 a year); intensive care staffing (£200,000); pain management (£60,000); and emergency theatre sessions (£80,000). GP John Nicholson said: "These services are vital. Any reduction is to be deplored."

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM



CONTRARY to the assertions of the scientifically illiterate media, the latest "evidence" from Professor John Collinge of a link between BSE and "new" strain CJD is very far from conclusive. It is merely a very small piece of an enormous jigsaw, the shape of which is unknown and the number of pieces of which are as yet beyond estimation.

Even the professor himself stops short of claiming proof and merely remarks in his *Nature* article that his results are "consistent with" BSE being the source of the "new" disease. Needless to say, this careful phrasing has been widely ignored.

Meanwhile the mass lobby of 2,000 farmers at the House of Commons last week, protesting at the handling of the BSE crisis, has largely been overshadowed by this latest twist in the saga, while the insanity spawned by the hysteria continues apace.

So far, 650,000 perfectly healthy cattle have been destroyed at a cost to the taxpayer of well over £400 million. Their only offence is that they were over 30 months old (*Eyes passim*). Even that has not been enough to clear the 400,000 backlog of "elderly" cattle, stacked up on Britain's farms.

Measures to speed up the destruction include hiring freezer containers to store carcases which rendering plants are unable to deal with. Their cost is going to be astronomic, estimated at up to £1,500 for each animal by the time their remains are finally incinerated.

With that, overall costs are now set massively to exceed the £500 million initially budgeted for this year. Meanwhile the NHS is facing its worst financial crisis for a decade: a shortfall of £200 million over the winter?

ANOTHER factor driving up costs of the mass slaughter is the stranglehold of the participating slaughterhouses, charging three times the commercial rate for killing animals.

But while Roger Freeman, minister responsible for killing healthy cows. has been able to force down the rate from an obscene £87.50 to an extortionate £41 per head, the big players are still hankering after higher fees which have so far brought in a cool £20 million profit.

Capitalising on the pressure to clear the backlog, they have demanded more from Freeman and have secured a deal where the current £41 now becomes the *minimum* payment, with the maximum so far unspecified. Furthermore, instead of sharing out the additional kill to a larger number of slaughterhouses, they have forced Freeman to hand them the extra work.

A hint of how far they have Freeman over a barrel came in August when negotiations were under way to reduce fees. Overnight all the slaughterhouses in Ulster were pulled out of the scheme, with a clear threat that mainland slaughterhouses would follow unless profit levels were maintained.

IT IS an odd reflection of the crisis that while consumption is steadily recovering, much of the havoc in the beef industry is caused by government measures to "restore public confidence".

Such a phenomenon might be considered an appropriate topic for the prestigious Oxford Farming Conference, which holds an annual debate on a subject of concern to agriculture. But farmers looking for a lead from this venerable institution will be disappointed. The event in January asks if "scientists or consumers should take precedence in decision-making".

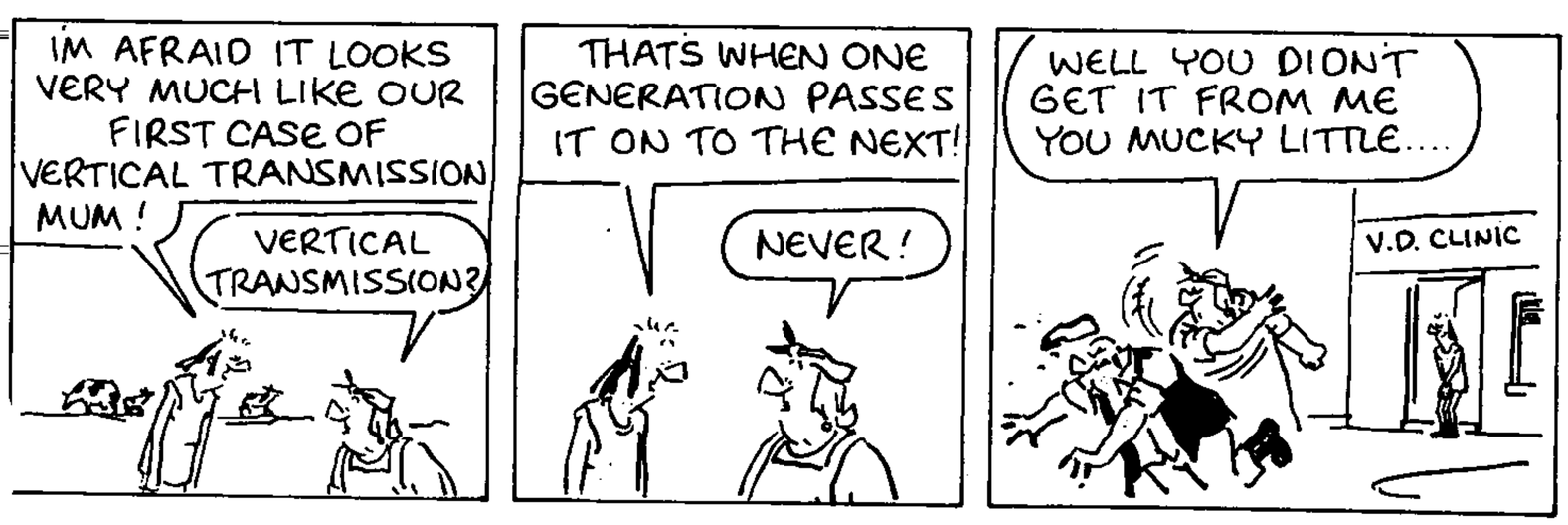
To debate this fatuous proposition (how can anyone make decisions on a scientific issue without primary input from scientists?), the two main speakers will be health secretary Stephen Dorrell and Sheila "Bigfoot" McKechnie, director of the Consumers Association.

How a politician, who so mismanaged scientific data that he triggered off the biggest food scare in history, can offer anything useful to the debate has yet to be explained. And when it is appreciated that the Consumer Association's main aim is to promote sales of its magazine *Which?* — not least by stoking up food scares — offering "Bigfoot" another platform to sell her rag hardly seems an intelligent way of furthering farming interests.

'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


IM AFRAID IT LOOKS VERY MUCH LIKE OUR FIRST CASE OF VERTICAL TRANSMISSION MUM!
VERTICAL TRANSMISSION?
THATS WHEN ONE GENERATION PASSES IT ON TO THE NEXT!
NEVER!
WELL YOU DIONT GET IT FROM ME YOU MUCKY LITTLE....
V.D. CLINIC

THE Rotten Borough Advertiser

Friday, 1 November 1996

DIDN'T THEY DO WELWYN?

MORE trouble is in store for Labour-controlled Welwyn Hatfield council, recently sued by a property company because it gave a rival developer planning permission for a similar (and competing) project.

Damages were £50 million, a massive sum for a council with a budget of only £9m. So who in Welwyn is to blame for this monstrous cock-up? Step forward council leader Ray Little, planning director Tony Moore and chief executive David Riddle.

Little, according to high court judge Mr Justice May, was one of six Labour councillors who "steered the rest" in setting up a "policy of lies". Planning director Moore, said Judge May, "peddled lies", while chief executive Riddle "perpetuated the decision he inherited".

Of course none has any intention of resigning — not even Little who has been implored to quit by Labour party officials, some of whom recently came up from London and camped out on his lawn for the weekend to change his mind.

Meanwhile the council is desperate for ways to make huge savings. Having started by handing over the £10 million it gained from selling council houses, the "Labour" council will next try to hive off the town hall to a hotel group, close public toilets and sell off rubbish bins and lamp posts to the highest bidder. That's if the government doesn't send in commissioners to run the place.

● The council, which runs one of the largest firework displays in the country at Stanborough Park, has another problem: the event has become so popular, safety rules for crowd control are being breached. Rather than implement new measures to manage the crowds and organise ticket entry, the council has come up with a cheaper solution. Every year the firework display is held on a Sunday. This year, with no advertising to inform the public of the change, they will hold the event on a Saturday. This should, councillors point out, drastically cut numbers.

NORTHERN EXPOSURE

THE arrival of Knightsbridge store Harvey Nichols in Leeds exposed the two faces of Labour.

Brian Walker, city council leader, went ape when he saw the vice-chair of the women's committee Doreen Lewis waging a hairy armpits, GLC-style sex war in national newspapers, complaining loudly that the opening had been announced by huge, oppressive posters of women wearing dog leads.

The slogan was pisspoor, too — "Harvey Nichols Leeds (not follows)" — but Lewis was most upset that many of the posters had been put next to the ones promoting the council's Zero Tolerance campaign against violence against women.

Council leader Walker bollocked Lewis and others: the arrival of big businesses like Harvey Nicks was far more important to the city than a campaign about violence against women, seemed to be the gist.

Walker then sent women's committee chair Alison Lowe on a tour of TV and radio studios to play down the affair and announce that the council was not really going to complain to the Advertising Standards Authority about the image of women on leashes.

Gushing Lowe gave an ab fab performance and promotion is expected — as is demotion for Lewis, who made the mistake of putting women before the interests of business.

BILLS! BILLS! BILLS!

ANOTHER job cock-up in Hackney — this time involving former social services manager Neil Niehorster, until recently in charge of the Markham Place home.

Niehorster was unusually qualified for the job: he used to be a milkman. Nevertheless, when he applied to be assistant social services director everyone talked about how well he had kept a rein on the budget — until someone opened his drawer and found £1.5 million worth of invoices for services Hackney had used but hadn't paid for.

Social services director Joyce Moseley blames former assistant director Anthony Douglas (now social services director in Havering) for not watching Niehorster more carefully. Another inquiry has been launched — with Moseley in charge. The first thing she must do is check how much is unpaid. At the last count it had exceeded £2 million and was rising...

Meanwhile, and despite pleading poverty, Hackney has agreed to underwrite the £60,000 losses incurred by last year's Hackney Arts Festival. The poorly-attended non-event resulted in the Irish band the Dubliners threatening the council with bailiffs unless they were paid.

Who messed up? Step forward actor Tony Allen, chair of Hackney Arts Festival Ltd, the private company which "ran" the fest for the supposedly socialist council. When the bills came in Allen went to the arts committee and begged for help — initially to no avail. Then occasional council leader John McCafferty reminded everyone that Allen was not only a former extra in *Crossroads* but a Hackney Labour councillor and staunch ally of... er, Mr McCafferty. The committee reconsidered and bailed him out.

Hackney's new corruption-spurning leaders want a code of conduct for councillors that will outlaw close relations between officers and members. The first victims of this clampdown are set to be social services director Joyce Moseley and her husband... Labour councillor Tony Allen!

BIFFA BUNG (2)

MORE on the mysterious £10,000 bung given by waste disposal merchants Biffa to Merthyr Tydfil.

The first explanation was that the company was paying the council for coal extraction. Since no coal has been extracted (see *Eye* 908), the council now says Biffa is allowing the authority to take 20 per cent of the profit from the Trecatti waste tip. This doesn't add up either: according to Biffa the site has not made a profit in three years — despite sizeable income from commercial dumping, which includes dangerous waste.

The council's claim that the £10,000 was spent on resurfacing the Blaen Dowlais road is equally mysterious as it has emerged that the now-defunct Mid-Glamorgan council paid £40,000 to Merthyr's direct service organisation... to resurface the road.

Meanwhile, Merthyr has responded to residents' questions about the bung by threatening to remove them from the Trecatti Liaison Committee. But it would be illegal to remove them without an agm — and the council has not managed to organise an agm in three years.

IN BRIEF

LOCHABER: A tribunal has found in favour of ex-council chief David Blair following his suspension and sacking after an internal investigation into housing contracts. Lochaber's successor, the Highland council, must give him a new job as a solicitor at £44,000 p.a., £70,000 compensation and pay his legal costs. Some suggest the eight councillors behind the sacking should be surcharged. Three serve on the new council.

RENFREWSHIRE: The Labour council is saving £6,000 by cancelling Christmas trees in many villages — but raising provost Nancy Allison's pay by £4,000, backdated to April. Her most recent jolly to Germany (to twin town Furth) was hard won: this time she had to ask for travel money before leaving and did not get to use her casting vote to pass her own expenses (*Eyes passim*). The trip was only passed when opposition Tory James McLaren voted in favour. Allison was accompanied to Furth by... James McLaren.

JUNKET OF THE WEEK: Eric Milligan, lord provost of Edinburgh (£35,000 allowances and newly-furbished £30,000 mayoral lavs) has refused to release details of his foreign visits thanks to new council rules which allow him to go anywhere in the world without committee approval. Recently he and his Mrs went to China and Hong Kong. Why did Milligan try to keep it quiet? Last year Japan invited his predecessor on an expenses-paid visit. China couldn't afford the same so Milligan paid his own way — £4,000 — and hushed it up so as not to embarrass his hosts.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK: Town hall officials in Douglas, Isle of Man, were impressed to get a note from chief technical officer Ian Clague. "Any person who is intoxicated on duty, or whilst liable to be called for duty, owing to alcohol... a gross misconduct... may be subsequently dismissed without notice." And so on. Staff were less impressed two months later when Clague was fined £600 and banned from driving for 18 months after he was caught driving with an alcohol-blood count twice the legal limit.

ELECTRICITY NEWS

LONDON Electricity has found a great way to squeeze money from customers — one of whom inherited a key meter only to find that it was collecting a debt of £9.46, which was owed by the previous occupier, at the rate of 50 pence a week.

London Electricity's so-called customer service staff confirmed this was the case and that they would not recompense the customer for his wasted 50 pence pieces.

It would have cost him more than £9.46 to take a day off to wait for a meter man to come and adjust his meter — so London Electricity has simply reclaimed its debt from an entirely different customer. Brilliant!

SIGNAL FAILURES

"AWAITING a loco" is not a good enough excuse for delays for one of our new private train operators: "awaiting a logo" is much better.

Passengers on the big East Coast mainline, between London and Edinburgh via Yorkshire and Tyneside, were unable to get the usual timetable leaflets when the winter train times were introduced at the end of September. The new timetables were eventually published last week, having been delayed awaiting a new branding commissioned by Sea Containers — the private company which took over the East Coast franchise earlier this year.

So travellers who didn't know when their trains were running could have taken comfort in the knowledge that, if they managed to catch a train, its colour scheme (unlike the train services) should be pleasingly coordinated.

RAILTRACK, which paid shareholders a £69 million dividend last spring, is earning pocket money from wheel-clamping cars in station car parks.

Railtrack manages 14 of the biggest stations in Britain, and at one of them an *Eye* reader was charged £70 to have a wheel clamp removed. He had returned late to his car because he had to ensure his children safely boarded their train — which was delayed by a Railtrack fault further up the line.

Railtrack says it has taken direct control of short-stay car parks at two of its major stations to avoid incidents of this kind; but this burst of sympathy and understanding for someone else's customers (passengers are not Railtrack's customers, we have been told repeatedly) does not extend to giving the *Eye* reader a rebate on his fine, let alone a refund.

HIGH-SPEED trains doubling up as vacuum cleaners are helping Railtrack cut costs on the privatised railway.

The latest examples of stations where Railtrack is not bothering to clean the tracks (see *Eyes passim*) come from the Rail Users' Consultative Committee for Western England. It has made representations about Reading station, where empty hypodermic syringes have been spotted among the detritus on the tracks. The rail watchdog adds: "One operator told us that the problem was not too serious on mainline platforms, as litter would eventually be swept out of the station area by the draught of high-speed trains."

'Dr B. Ching'

"Mountbatten, at that moment when I was to see him face to face for the first time, was perhaps at the height of his many-sided spirit. Physically he was, of course, incredibly handsome, handsome in a way which was illuminated by the feeling that came from him of boundless vitality and energies demanding instant expression and, as so often in great men, a keen sense of theatre. In his presence, even when nothing was said, as one looked at him one thought of the most contemporary of images; of a car with the engine already tuned and humming, quietly ready to take him swiftly off into another dimension of action...

I entered his room and immediately, as we did in the army, stood to attention; but already he was out of his seat and, with his hand outstretched, he came to meet me. Outwardly everything about him was immaculate. There was no need for the housewives of the spirit with their critical and moralistic brooms to go behind his footsteps and mop where his spirit had trod. Whether right or wrong, his spirit was polished, swift and clean.

LAURENS VAN DER POST
"The Admiral's Baby"

Submitted by E. Strobes.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Letters

Lloyd's listing

Sir,

I hope I show no disrespect at this sad time in adding my own valedictory to the praises of Mr Major and Mr Blair on the tragic passing of "Saint" Matthew Harding.

In common with the thousands of Chelsea Football Club supporters, I am one of the thousands of innocent and bankrupt Lloyd's "names" who will also wish to remember him.

Many newspaper readers will have wondered how Lloyd's reinsurance broker St Matthew managed to make £170 million (cf last edition of SUNDAY TIMES *500 richest people) in just a few years. He was the main originator of the famous "spiral", in which stupid "excess of loss" reinsurance underwriters allowed the same original premiums to go round and round in circles with hundreds of millions of pounds often ending up being reinsured again where they started. With St Matthew taking an incredible 10 percent commission on each transaction, those last in line and on the way to last were taking the business at a negative rate several points less than the risks had originally been assessed at.*

All would have gone well, of course, if there hadn't been some terrible disasters which, starting from the original "catastrophe" reinsurance polices, went through the higher and higher reinsurance "layers" and beyond. Let us hope a similar fate does not await broker St Bill and a few other beatific philanthropists.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW SCOTT-JAMES,
Lloyd's.

Right to deny

Sir,

Re: Hackwatch: Olympic Gold. The article in PRIVATE EYE *of 4 October 1996 makes a number of false allegations about me. It is wholly inaccurate and defamatory. Please note this for the record.*

Please also note that my rights in the matter are fully reserved.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MILLER,
Chief Sports Corr., The Times.

Lookalike

Charlton

Picasso

Sir,

Am I right in thinking that the popular footballer Bobby Charlton had another brother, who, having failed to make the grade as a footballer, ran away to Spain and became some sort of artist? Perhaps your readers could throw some more light on this matter?

With compliments,
ENA B. HIGNETT,
Edinburgh.

The Eyes have it

Sir,

Your banner headline "Eye Referendum: Is he mad? Yes/No" was obviously inaccurate and should have read "Eye Referendum: Is he mad? Yes/Yes".

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD HILTON,
London SW19.

All a loan

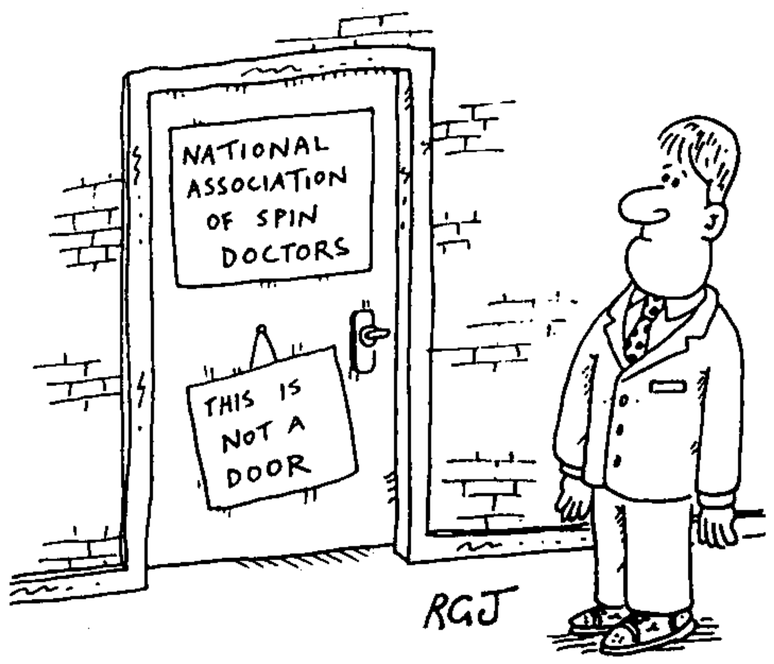
Sir,

Re: EYE *909, Charity News. My wife being a rehabilitation officer with the Guide Dogs for the Blind, I declare an interest. All MPs please note!*

The association does not only train and provide guide dogs. It provides and finances many other functions in the rehabilitation of visually impaired people. In many instances it is doing the job which the cash strapped local authorities have a statutory duty to provide but cannot. Often it is in partnership with such authorities or complementary to the inadequate service they are providing. There is always the need for large assets because there are always plans in the pipe line to spend it on projects that benefit the visually impaired.

My wife for example does not work with dogs. She trains visually impaired people how to look after themselves, at home, at work, at school, how to be mobile, to cross the road, to cook, to find their way to the shops and around them, to do braille, to use sophisticated technical equipment, often to transform themselves from a "vegetable" type existence to an active enjoyable life.

Yours sincerely,
TIM WOOD,
Bristol.



Scale models

Sir,

You report a dogfight in Glasgow about weighing guide dogs; it was actually a storm in a teacup. For years guide dog owners in the city have been allowed to use the trading standards officers' scales to check their dogs' weight; this is a service not to The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, but to Glasgow's council taxpayers. If this service is withdrawn, Glasgow's guide dog owners will have to use much less convenient public weighing scales or journey to the GDBA premises outside the city centre where we provide scales.

Incidentally, GDBA most emphatically does **not** *"collect more money than it spends". Last year, we had to draw nearly £10m from our reserves to fund our work, which included training a record number of guide dogs and their owners (more than any other guide dog organisation worldwide), offering an increasing range of other services to visually impaired people and being among the country's top four funders for ophthalmic research. Without a secure financial base, we would have had to cut services and our lifelong commitment to our clients to provide replacement guide dogs would have been put at risk.*

Yours faithfully,
ALISON RADEVSKY,
PR and Marketing Manager, The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

I-SPY *Ayrshire*

BLAIR POLICIES
Open for pedestrians only
9am 6pm
No cars,bicycles or dogs
Please keep to paths and do not leave
any litter or disturb flowers or trees

Submitted by Ralph Branholtz. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Point of no return

Sir,

*Please give the full story on the recent Palestinian-Israeli clashes: Jonathan Balcombe (*EYE *909) is wrong when he says the Palestinian police opened fire on Israelis. What they did was return the fire of the Israeli police and army units busy mowing down Palestinian protestors who had — it's true — hurled insults and rocks their way.*

It's true I wasn't there but neither, I'd bet, was Mr Balcombe. The people who were — the entire world's press — all agree with the Palestinians on this but they have sadly reverted to saying it under their breath.

Yours faithfully,
ANDY CRICK,

London SW11.

Lookalike

Winner **Cartland**

Sir,

Has anyone else noticed the remarkable resemblance between the well known novelist and the large food critic? They say that there is a link between romance and food, but I think there is a winner here. I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY WEAVER,

Malta.

Psion of the times

Sir,

*I have no connection, other than as a customer, with Psion or Hewlett-Packard; nor would I be eligible to vote for Paddy Ashdown's party, even if I wanted to, but feel that the Marquesa has been less than fair (*EYE *909).*

I have twice seen the great hero of the minority on television with a Psion 3a to hand. With this hand-held computer available, I cannot think why he should want to use an HP organiser.

Perhaps he keeps it for swatting flies or journalists and that is why he was waving it at the Lib Dem conference.

ALAN RANKIN,

Belfast.

Well stacked

Sir,

Thought you might like to know they've still to get the measure of your organ in Bracknell. When I asked for the EYE *in a high street newsagents, I was told it's stocked next to the, unfamiliar to me, mag* BREASTS IN JELLY. *And sure enough it was.*

ANON,

Via e-mail.

Sub standards

Sir,

Stop taking the piss out of sub-titlers (Ceefux, EYE *909).*

By its nature the difficult task of simultaneous sub-titling relies heavily on phonetics for both inputting and outputting. The poor speech of most TV talkers doesn't help.

Even pre-preparation has its problems. The sub-titles have to be edited to be in sync with the pix. If TV talkers could enunciate as clearly as Susan Charlton and Trevor McDonald then many hard-of-hearing people would not need the invaluable sub-titles.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN T. SHEPHERD,

London SE21.

Housewives' choice

Sir,

Thank you, thank you for the wonderful A.A. Gill song. My women friends and I sing it as we go about our chores. It makes housework fun!

Regards,
A.A. WOMAN,

North London.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"The crowd are off their feet..."
JONATHAN LEGARD, Radio 5 Live
(James Travers)

"Blackburn Rovers have a bottomless pit of money and now they've sold Alan Shearer for 15 million pounds, that pit is even deeper."
COLIN GIBSON, BBC Radio Lancs
(Anthony Mullen)

Dennis Pennis: *Are you ever going to release an autobiography?*
Chris Eubank: *On what?*
BBC2
(Tony Cooper)

"The silence is getting louder."
DAVE WOODS, BBC Radio 5
(Tony Furnandiz)

"Good luck to Arsenal against Borussia Münchengladbach tonight — now there's a team you wouldn't want to play at Scrabble."
PAT SHARPE, Capital Radio
(Dan Mindel)

Letter from **Washington**

from Our Own Correspondent

BE careful what you wish for, all you political pundits: as the US presidential election campaign shows, you might just get it.

Having decried the descent into the sewer that negative advertising and character assassination have spawned, the press and public have got what they said they wanted: a civil, gentlemanly presidential campaign about what pass for the issues. The result? No one's in the slightest bit interested.

It's all doubly ironic. Apart from his own vulnerability to negative attack, the main reason Bob Dole has refused to go for Bill Clinton's jugular on character and ethics is that he believes the advisers who tell him that it will turn voters off. With 50 percent turnouts at the polling booths on a low voter registration count, both sides are almost as concerned about the political viability of the electoral system — "who's going to turn up on the day", as Clinton so tellingly put it — as the result.

Dole, as wary of the obituary writers as his opponent, is desperate to shed his image as mean-spirited and unlikeable. In 1970 when his senate career was on the line he proved to himself that he could do anything to win: authorising distribution of macabre leaflets showing aborted foetuses to defeat his obstetrician opponent by a hair's breadth. Now, as he's admitted to more than one hack, he'd rather lose than "not be at peace with myself".

To that end he's doing just fine. It's hardly surprising that a candidate in his 70s running a 1970s campaign can hardly get to grips with Clinton. How much the world of presidential politics has changed from the norms of Dole's era is clear from the polls: a majority of Americans think Clinton dishonest and untrustworthy. An even bigger majority, however, think he's still perfectly fit to serve as president. As one columnist pointed out, 25 years after Nixon, America has achieved the normalisation of Nixonian ethics.

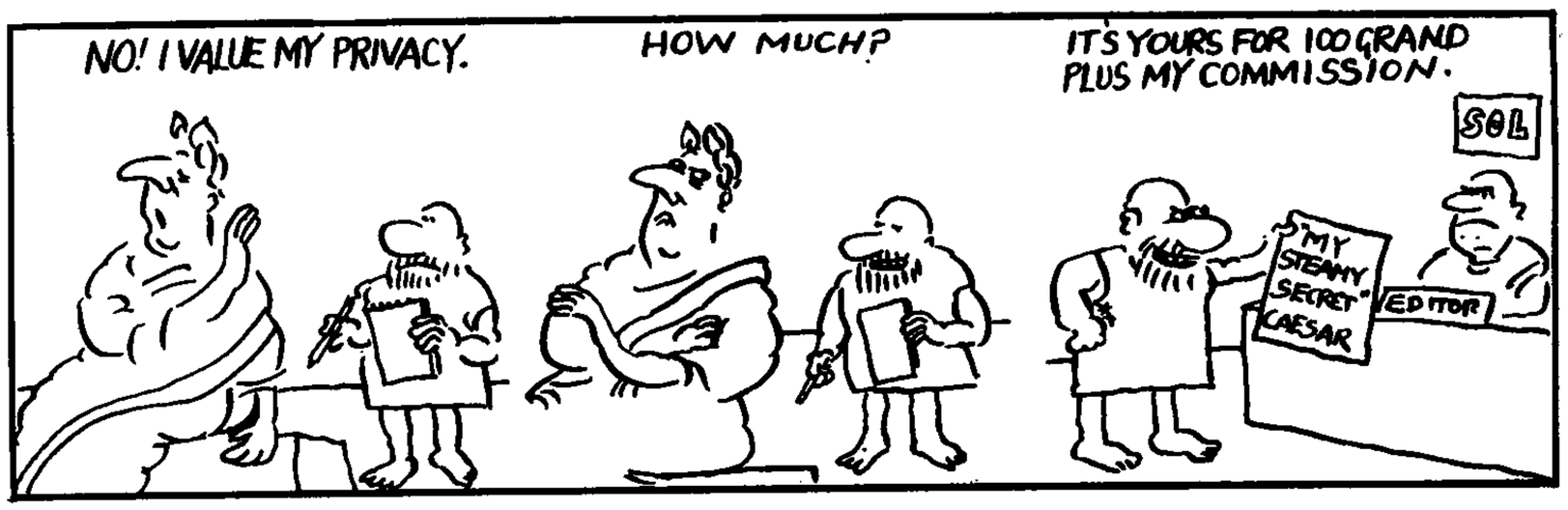
The truth is frightening but not surprising. It's often said that Clinton's political genius is metamorphosing into whatever people want him to be — often with alarming speed. But that may be because in Clinton's flip-flops and paradoxes they see themselves. The electorate want to preserve all those government programmes but are staggered if you suggest they pay for them; they want tough welfare reform but don't want to cut anyone's cheque; they want medicare for all, but no bills. It's the ultimate audience for the man who smoked — but didn't inhale.

When, with seven days to go, you find Democrats campaigning in alien Alabama and Louisiana and Dole flying into republican New Hampshire to shore up a crumbling base, you know it's all over bar the cheerleading.

Dole, meanwhile, down jacket and all, has been advised to forget the presidential poll and try to stop the Democrat tide in congress by concentrating on key congressional races. If only he could. Terrified that a Dole appearance might tip a marginal contest against them, more than 20 Republicans have politely refused a visit by the candidate. When he left the senate Dole said he had nowhere to go but home or the White House. Home it most certainly is.

HOM SAP

AUSTIN



● **The new book, *Colemanballs 8*, is on sale now — £3.99**

FUNNY OLD WORLD

"Is the Minister aware of the fact that a doctor at the Otjiwarongo Hospital, the superintendent no less, removed haemorrhoids from a patient and sewed up his anus?" MP Katuutire Kaura asked during Question Time in the Namibian National Assembly.

Replying for the government, Dr Libertine Amathila, the new Minister for Health and Social Security, sought to reassure Parliament. "The government is aware of this unfortunate incident. The man's anus was accidentally sewn up, but nobody realised at first. After three days, when he had failed to eructate his nates, the doctor prescribed strong laxatives. But these, instead of easing the problem, made the situation even worse by reversing the process back to his mouth and causing him to erupt like a foul volcano. It was only after a week, when the patient's condition became critical, that he was more fully examined, and it was discovered that his anus had been sewn up. It was then a simple matter for the doctor to relieve him with a pair of scissors."

At that point another MP intervened to ask Mr Kaura "whether the rumours are true, that you were the unfortunate patient". After a heated exchange of views, punches were thrown and the Speaker ordered both men to be removed from the Chamber. *(The Windhoek Advertiser, 25/9/96. Spotter — Martin Fowler)*

—o—

"Men are easy," said Judge Shirley Strickland Saffold, while passing sentence on Katie Nemeth in a Cleveland court. "My advice is to dump your boyfriend, show your legs, and find a nice doctor to marry."

After fining 19-year-old Nemeth $200 for allowing her boyfriend to misuse a stolen credit card, 65-year-old Judge Saffold gave further guidance to the guilty woman. "You can put on a short skirt, go to the bus stop, cross your legs, and pick up 25 men. Ten of them will give you their money but, if you don't pick up the first ten, then all you got to do is open your legs a little bit and cross them at the bottom and then they'll stop. Go to a bus stop near a medical school and you'll marry a doctor lickety-split. All you got to do is take a biology book — don't even read it — and when one of them walks by say 'Excuse me, can you tell me what this means?' And you got yourself a date."

After complaints from feminists about the sexist nature of her remarks, Judge Saffold told reporters: "I have been ill. Even so, they're only complaining because they're too fat and ugly to get a man. They should buy a razor and go on a diet. But, as I say, I'm not very well." *(The Gainesville Sun, 16/8/96. Spotter — Mrs M. Ollier)*

—o—

"I hit upon the idea of starting a laughter club so the common man could become healthy without having to spend any money," Dr Madan Kataria told reporters in Lokhandwala, during a tour round one of Bombay's 26 laughter clubs. "Membership is free, and the men and women who join in the jollity are doing so with the aim of laughing all the way to good health."

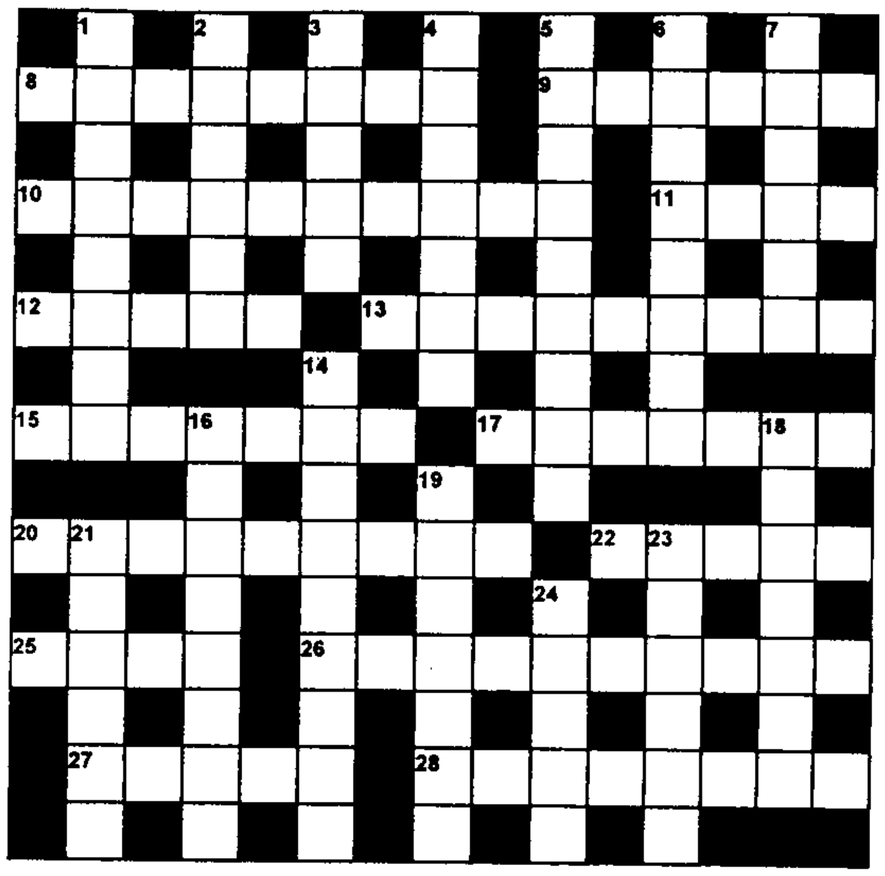
Dr Kataria then explained the operation of the laughter clubs, the first of which opened a year ago. "Men and women begin by standing in separate rows with their hands raised and chanting 'Ho ho! Ha ha!' for several minutes. Then a fully qualified medical practitioner

walks among them wearing a wig on a string and a rubber nose, and telling jokes while tickling their midriffs with a peacock feather to induce giggling. Lastly, there is free and open laughter, which can go on for fifteen or twenty minutes. We can cure asthma, bronchitis, anxiety, depression and high blood pressure, and the tears of laughter also cleanse the eyes, adding sparkle. We are like one big extended family, and the clubs are now spreading to France, Hong Kong, Italy and Japan. We are now seeking funds to establish a Laughter Research Centre in Korea." (Hong Kong Standard, 19/9/96. Spotter — George Adams)

COMPILED BY

Victor Lewis-Smith

35th Anniversary £100 Crossword (65) by CYCLOPS



ACROSS

8 Run an exposé: 'Humanitarian's mean!' (8)
9 The old guard talk affectionately before and partly during post-menopausal treatment (6)
10/12 A time for us to celebrate... (6-4,5)
11 ...Fry, a great funny man no more (4)
12 (see 10)
13 What's lower than swearing? Being obliged to tell the truth! (5,4)
15 Ed once accepted sheep should get good stuffing (7)
17 He helped start us taking two types of speed (7)
20 Dick look-alikes? (9)
22 Exploiting caveman talk to grab some hanky-panky (5)
25 Oasis leader possesses no great presence in the main (4)
26 Doubtless it also has a good smell of another's crack! (7,3)
27 O! Mystic one, it's the last of the series (5)
28 Dead bolshie liberal providing an opening for our spirited correspondent (4,4)

DOWN

1 The majority of kids' holes of course? (8)
2 One who makes their mark as a successful shagger? (6)
3 Yard briefly to OK laundered capital (5)
4 Not the most desirable of models after Robin? (7)
5 Had sex — not in bed — botched it (7,2)
6 That particular rag covering bishops and the like (3,5)
7 Loveless politician rejected experience (3,3)
14 Drunken bum and some pointless people's champion (9)
16 Got someone to come and experience again swallowing an 'E' on date (8)
18 See about employing Wogan somehow — as a gift to the other side! (3,4)
19 Arses supporting Socialist leader (7)
21 Quiz show participant gets *Hallo!* splash (6)
23 Hack uses small capitals originally to take the piss out of English (6)
24 Sort of watchdog frequently seen round W1 (5)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 08.11.96. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 64

Winner: J. KEENE

ACROSS: 8 Tony Benn 9 Hard-on 10 Stools 11 Ram-raid 12/13 Doing The Rounds 13 (see 12) 15 Kneecap 17 Tory wet 20 Smart bomb 22 Photo 25 Rosette 26 Bum bag 27 Guyana 28 Oddballs.

DOWN: 1 Soft porn 2 Tycoon 3 Mensa 4 Anarchy 5 The Mirror 6 Treasury 7 Sordid 14 Ian Botham 16 Eurostar 18 Entrails 19 Emperor 21 Morgue 23 Hom Sap 24 Abode.

The Lottery Winners

TURNER

● *Funny Old World* — **The Book. Out now, £4.99**

TRIBUTES POUR IN TO MAN THEY CALLED MR NEASDEN

ON Saturday, the ground at Neasden Bridge stood silent as fans (Sid and Doris Bonkers) bowed their reverent heads in silent silence as a pall of grief hung heavy under the ashen-faced skies of a mournful October day that echoed the grieving mood of an entire nation who held hands and joined hearts as they burst into a spontaneous rendition of Fauré's Requiem *(shurely 'Ere we go'? Ed.)* **and there was no mistaking the empty seat in the directors' box which was empty except for a single scarf, a single red rose, a solitary pint of Guinness and a piece of cardboard with "Why?" written on it** *(continued in all newspapers and magazines).*

by Our Bad Taste Staff **R.I.P. Adioo**, Our Man With The Floral Tribute And The Piece Of Cardboard With "Why?" Written On It In Biro Which He Has Put Down Himself In Order To Photograph.

British statesmen pay tribute to the man they had never heard of until yesterday.

National Curriculum

(Module 94)

Morality Test

Name: Do not put name here as it cannot be revealed for legal reasons.

1. Do you know the difference between good and bad?
a) Yes
b) No.

2. Have you lied in the above question?
a) Yes
b) Mind your own business or I'll thump you.

3. Is it wrong to kill?
a) I didn't do it
b) I blame my parents
c) I blame society.

4. Why is selling cocaine wrong?
a) It isn't
b) Do you want some?
c) My mobile number is 0890 37242.

5. Look at these two knives. Which one is yours?
a) I threw it away
b) I always carry a gun
c) You're asking a lot of questions for someone who wants to stay alive.

6. Is it right for Mrs Shephard to force you to take this examination in order to help Mr Major win the election?
a) Who is Mrs Shephard?
b) Who is Mr Major?
c) What is an election?

Time allowed: 3 years (12 months suspended)

GLENDA LASLAGGE

Fleet Street's Prime Rubbish

● GEOFF BOYCOTT!? Donchaluv-him? Well all the other gals do apparently!? (Geddit?) OK so he bashes up the odd bird but you can count on it that when Geoff does it he does so with grace and skill and style and chooses just the right minute to hit out!?! Yes, you can be sure that Boycs takes a run only when hubby is coming down the drive and he'll have a solid defence when the maiden bowls him over in the tabloids?! Good old Geoff!!

○ GEOFF BOYCOTT!? What a bastard!? Who does this Yorkshire oik think he is?! Casa-bleedin'-nova?!!! Bashanova-the-head more likely?! (Geddit?!) If I were his bird (which thank Gawd I aint!?!) it would be me who would pad up and buy a helmet?!! Why don't we all just *Boycott* him?!! (Geddit?!?!) Bugger off back to the Referendum Party with all the other lunatics and wierdos!?!

■ *HATS OFF to Richard Branson!? The Roaming-Handed Romeo of the skies!? No wonder the girls are queuing up at Beardie's check-in desk!? And you can betcha they're not virgins (Geddit?). I say what Britain needs is more hands-on managers like Big Dick?! (Geddit?!)*

● ISN'T HE disgusting? Richard Branson I mean, stoopid!? With his filthy pullover and scruffy beard he looks like a dirty old man — which he is!? You want Auntie Glenda's opinion?! You're virgin on the obscene mate! Take off in one of your silly balloons and don't come back!

○ TALKING of silly beards, seen Trevor Nunn's *Twelfth Night*?! It won't run until the thirteenth?! (Geddit?) Sorry, Luvvie?! (Geddit!)

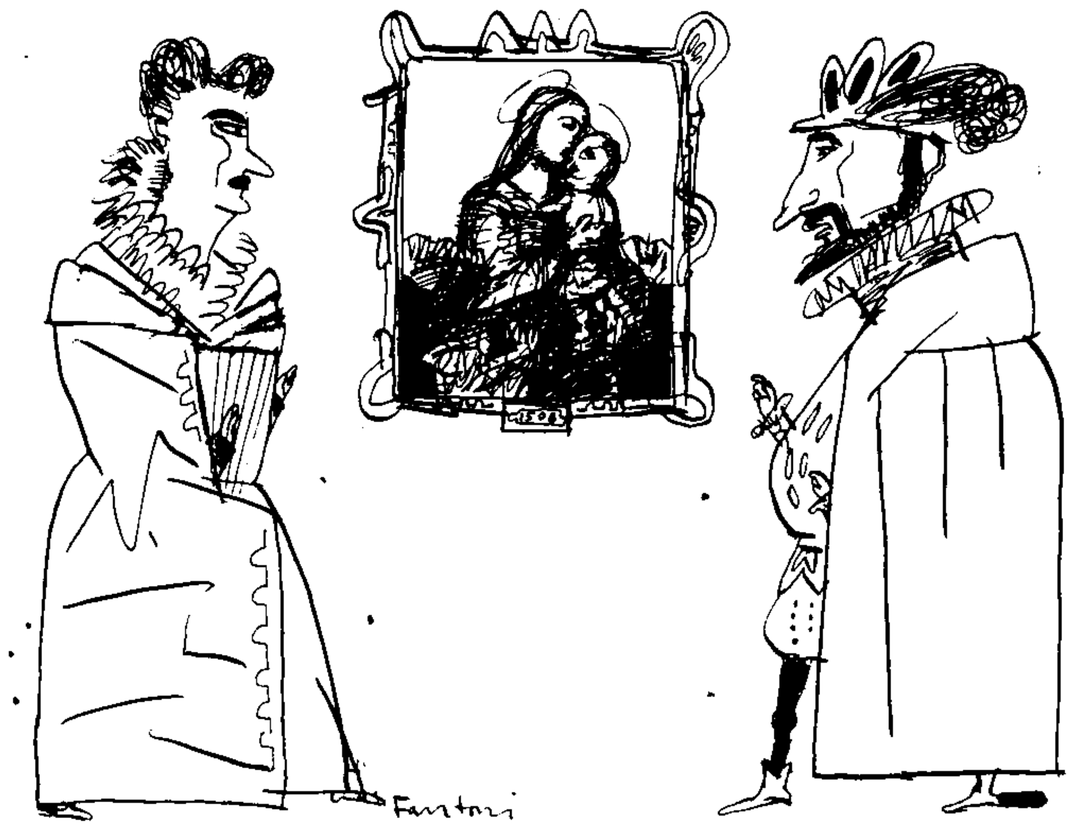
○ HERE they are — Glenda's Bonfire Bangers!

CHRISTOPHER BROCKLEBANK-FOWLER — he doesn't know what party to join — so he can come round and join mine?!

SENATOR DOLE — OK, so you had a mistress 30 years ago?? Wanna try your luck again? (Geddit?)

ALEXANDER McQUEEN — Queen by name, Queen by nature?! But that's alright with me!? Any man who designs the "Bumster" must be a complete arse!? Geddit!?

Ciaoooooeee!



"I won it in a Raphael"

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Saturday

Today is the first day of the rest of my life. This is a quotation from the new Oxford Book of Quotations By Great Political Leaders, which is going to help me win the next election. Not that I need any help. Oh no. I am pleased to see that there are several quotations from me in the book, including "I am still here", "I will not rule it in or rule it out", and "England is a country of warm beer and cold pieces of cheese from the freezer". I am also very pleased to see that Mrs Thatcher has only got six pages as against my three entries, which is a pretty poor showing considering how many years she was prime minister. I am sending them another quote for their next edition from my historic conference speech, which came too late for this one. It goes as follows:

"If we are not a united party, we are not a united party."

J. Major, Bournemouth, October 1996.

This message has definitely sunk in and, since I said this, only one of our MPs has gone over to the Lib Dems, eg Mr Peter Thurdman. And now he is gone we are more united than ever, because he is not around to disagree with us any more.

Sunday

I am glad to say the Referendum Party has been a complete flop. They could not even decide what their policy on Europe is! They say they are going to wait and see! What a pathetic policy that is. They are never going to win the election with that sort of wishy-washy approach. When I explained this to my wife Norman, she gave me a funny look. I told her that we are the real Referendum Party and that we are pledged to have a referendum if we should decide to have one. "You're as mad as Goldsmith," said Norman, grating some frozen cheese onto our cornflakes, which is a tip she has picked up from a very interesting TV programme called The Two Fat Ronnies. Anyway, Mr Sir James Goldsmith and his toffee-nosed friends are no match for a grammar school boy who came from two rooms in Brixton.* And Mr Sir James only got 5000 people to come to his conference which shows that no one is interested in his so-called Memorandum Party, unlike my conference when we had nearly 3000.

Monday

At last I think I have discovered the secret weapon which will win us the election. And it is nothing to do with Mr Dr Mawhinney and all his silly ideas about cheese. It is nothing more nor less than a Great Moral Crusade. We are going to make sure that there is no more violence in our society. All guns and knives will be banned (except of course the ones that British sportsmen use to win gold medals at the Olympics). And very tough new measures will be introduced to reintroduce proper discipline in Britain's schools. Mrs Shephard will bring in an Act of Parliament to allow teachers to say "everyone be quiet" without any risk of being reported to social workers for child abuse. I was just writing all this down in my exercise book labelled "Ideas For The Queen's Speech by J. Major" when I heard on the radio that Mr Blair has already pinched all my ideas about a moral crusade, and so has Mr Ashdown. How can they pretend to believe in a moral crusade, when all they do is go around stealing other people's ideas, ie my moral crusade, which I heard on Thought For The Day?

Tuesday

Today we begin the last lap in the great race towards my election victory next May. It is the opening of Parliament when Her Majesty The Queen reads out all her ideas for what the government should do. Most of her ideas as usual I could agree with 100 percent, but unfortunately there was no mention of the two most important issues facing Britain today, eg stalkers and paedophiles. Typically, Mr Blair tried to catch me out afterwards, by saying that I had told the Queen not to say anything about paedophiles and stalkers. But I immediately jumped up

with my ringbinder and made him look silly by saying: "I agree with everything the Hon Gentleman proposes, except of course that I should resign."

Wednesday

Mr Blair is in trouble again, this time with the Catholic Church. It serves him right. He has been telling everyone about his Christian beliefs but now a cardinal in Scotland has said that Mr Blair is not very Christian at all. Oh no. Mr Blair has said that he is against abortion but has not voted against it in Parliament! He is totally inconsistent. Imagine this man having to decide on the Single European Currency! There would never be any decisions made. It would be a nightmare. "Yes, it is," said Norman, rather missing the point as usual.

* I am sticking to the two rooms version of events despite the fact that Terry has written in his new column in the Daily Express that there were five rooms, including the Gnome Shed at the bottom of the garden and the rabbit hutch, which later became the Squirrel House. Terry as usual is completely rewriting history in order to make himself more interesting, eg by swanking about how many rooms we had when we were younger.

● *The 5th & Ultimate Secret Diary of John Major* — **now on sale, £4.99**

Tonight's TV Highlights BBC

7.00 **The Cone Men**: real-life drama documentary which follows the 6-man M25 Cone Squad as they race into action to shut off the A23 Gatwick interchange following the breakdown of an HGV on the hard-shoulder. Led by Cone Commander Bill "Billy" Bixworth.

8.00 **The Para Vets**: real-life drama documentary showing the work of the Blue Cross crack Emergency Response Unit, led by Senior Paravet Officer Karen Fieldgate. *Tonight's gripping episode follows* Karen's team as they are helicoptered in to rescue a pet goldfish from up a tree.

9.00 **The Lift Boys**: new series. Michael Buerk introduces real-life reconstructions of incidents involving people being trapped in lifts. Tonight's episode centres on five businessmen caught between Floors 1 and 2 of the Cardiff Exhibition Centre. Will "Taffy" Teflon and his expert team of ElevatorRescuespecialists manage to get them out in time for the importantsales conference?

10.00 **Spiderwatch UK**: new series. Nick Ross introduces real-life reconstructions of the vital work of the Manchester arachno-busters. Tonight an Oldham widow panics when she finds a spider in her bath and calls in Pete "Scully" Fishwick and the squad. Later they are called out again on a false alarm, when a teenager thinks she has seen a spider underneath her bed.

11.00 **Baggage Cops**: Jeremy Paxman introduces new drama series based on the work of Gatwick Airport's elite luggage police. Led by former top Scotland Yard detective Charlie "Trolley" Catchpole, their job is to keep Europe's fourth busiest airport free from suitcase gridlock. Tonight panic breaks out when a passenger's golfbag on Flight BA725 from Amsterdam jams the notorious Carousel 3. Will the baggage cops get it moving, in time for the passenger to make his onward connection to Oman? *(That's enough TV. Ed.)*

THE Queen has made an anonymous donation to the Lord Mayor of Manchester's bomb fund.

Sunday Telegraph

DIM, SIGHTLESS MAJOR

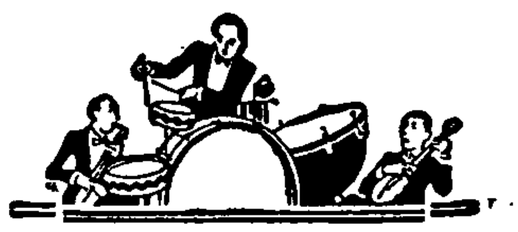
CAN you find the maverick millionaire in today's anagram, set by Mrs M. Mathews, of Bolton, Lancs?

Daily Mail

IPFRONTERS goes to the Referendum Party

All of England's top society flocked to the social event of the year!! It was the most glittering occasion anyone can remember! Just look at these fantastically famous, brilliant and aristocratic people! This is the crème de la crème with nobs on!

This friendship is more than **Luke**warm! Lovely hostess **Carla** is after supreme **Powell**!?! and she wants **Paul Johnson**'s millionaire catering son to give her a pizza the action!?!



Right-Wing Said **Freddie**! Mr **Forsyth** is getting a novel approach from the lovely **Carla**! *The Day of the Referendum* might be his next saga! All **Powell** to him! *(You've done this. Ed.)*

"We are going to murder the opposition!" says **Claus von Bulow**. Surely you should wait for the **Count,** says the lovely **Carla**!! She's the **Powell** behind the throne, that's for certain! *(You're fired. Ed.)*

It's animal magnetism when **Mr Aspinall** is on the scene! The only man-eating tiger here is top society hostess **Carla**!? Feel the **Powell** John!? *(Look, you've done this. Ed.)*

Sir James relaxes after a successful conference?! It's Jams yesterday, Jams today *and* Jams tomorrow as far as he's concerned!! And where's the lovely **Carla**?! *(That really is enough. Ed.)*

From The Referendum Bunker

TOP SECRET

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY, MR BOND

So, Mr Major-Bond. At last you have seen the reality of my Marmite Army at my Brighton Rally.

Impressive, nicht wahr? Frightening, almost.

And now, after our little show of strength, it is but just one more tiny step and the moment when I assume supreme power will have arrived!

And so, Mr Major, you are wondering, like the whole nation, what the first Goldsmith administration will look like.

(Strokes white cricket jumper, formerly the property of Mr G. Borecott, Yorkshire and England)

Carla, the seating plan for my Cabinet...

(Enter sultry temptress in diamante cheetah-skin leotard, the gift of Chief Brutalezi, First Minister and Life President of the Kingdom of Zululalia. She presses button to activate 80-foot-high telescreens showing secret Cabinet Room in the bowels of Fishpaste Towers)

Let me introduce them, one by one. I think you will find some faces you recognise.

Firstly, my Deputy and Minister For Population Control, Mr John Aspinall, and his team of highly trained man-eating tigers.

Next, my Minister of Finance, my old friend Mr Jim Slater. No one has a greater grasp of money than he does.

Now, a most important portfolio – Minister for Information and Propaganda, Mr Cokeupthenos, owner of the only Greek column nobody wants.

My Home Secretary and Minister for Morality, Mr Paul Johnson, owner of a large number of English columns which nobody wants.

And this brings me neatly on to my Minister for Fish, Dr Christopher Barkworth of the Sunday Telegraph.

(Strange bespectacled figure appears, dragging small son with "Vote Sir Jams" badge on)

Sir James and the Marmite Soldiers on manoeuvres in Brighton

Leader of the House of Lords, Lord Lucan, declared innocent by my Lord Chancellor, Lord Carter-Ruck of the Ritz.

Now, Mr Bond, wake up. You will be wondering about the constitutional position.

I am sure you would agree that our so-called Royal Family, like our politicians, have – how shall I put it? – failed the nation. That is why they must be flushed down the toilet. Instead the people of Britain must be given a monarch they can look up to.

May I present His Majesty King Edward the Fox!

(Mad figure in plus-fours comes on, accompanied by massed choirs singing Vivat Rex)

THE KING: I say! Jolly good show, Jimmy! Got rid of all those pinkoes and Bertie Woofters.

So, Mr Major-Bond. Your little game is almost up. Your brief moment of fame is almost at an end, before you are swept down the toilet of history.

And then begins the glorious new era of Referendumism, which will last for a thousand years.

(The leader climbs into nuclear-powered straitjacket and takes off to the nearest Black Hole to address huge rally of anti-protons and quarks)

Issued on behalf of the Referendum Party of Great Britain

BSE CRISIS SOLVED AS NEW INCINERANT DISCOVERED

by Our Environmental Correspondent **C.J.D. Booker**

A PLAN to speed up the mass incineration of Britain's unwanted cow carcasses has been unveiled by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Mr Gummer revealed yesterday that an extraordinary new form of fuel has been developed at the Fayed Research Laboratory in Knightsbridge which has been offered to the government entirely free.

It is understood that the fuel consists of millions of unsold copies of the humorous magazine Punch. Said Professor Stewart Steven: "This solves two environmental problems at a stroke. By wrapping the cows in bundles of unsold copies of Punch we accelerate the beef burning process and also dispose of vast quantities of one of the world's major pollutants."

Mr al-Fayed is not English.

That Queen's Speech In Full

1) My government will read the editorials in Britain's tabloids and will introduce legislation immediately, with no thought at all, along the lines suggested therein.

2) My Government will also do whatever Mr Blair and his friends suggest, providing that it is in line with the official viewpoint of Her Majesty's Sun Newspaper.

3) Er...

4) That's it.

5) Remember, there's more fun in the Soaraway Queen's Speech!

MANAGER
TERRACE RESTAURANT
JOLLYS • BATH
Salary fully negotiable + bonus
GIVE US YOUR BODY AND WE'LL GIVE YOU OUR SOUL!
Bath Chronicle

New From The Daily Telegraph

Teach Yourself Latin Partem XCIV

Remembering what you learnt last week, translate the following sentences into English:

1. Conradus Niger divissimus Canadiensis est.

2. Barbara Amiella puella pulcherrima est.

3. Niger amat Barbaram et conjugat illam.

4. Redactor Telegraphi, Carolus Plus Etoniensis, donet columnam ad Barbaram.

5. Columnus Barbarae tediusissimus est.

6. Circulatio Telegraphi descendit celerrime.

7. Murdochus in America ridet.

OLDHAM is to get its first privately-run cemetery, despite grave concerns from residents and local councillors.

Oldham Advertiser

Train to teach English as a Forgein Language

Part-Time Courses Monday - Thursday Evenings

Centre for Language Study advertisement

. No matter, it's a very fine production of the most classical of classical ballets, with its haunting Tchaikovsky score, and - Birmingham Royal Ballet's version, at least - never fails to disappoint.

Venue

6 MILLION TODDLERS ABUSED EVERY SECOND — IT'S OFFICIAL

by Our Bogus Statistics Staff **Enid Rancid**

AN official report published by the National Society For the Propaga-tion of Cooked-Up Statistics (NSPCS) reveals that the newspapers will print absolutely anything without bothering to check it, when it relates to toddlers or child abuse.

The report claims that there are "17 billion incidents of child abuse in Britain" every day, ranging from looking at a child while it is asleep in bed to talking about it behind its back.

As a result, billions of Britain's 15 million toddlers are growing in a "seriously traumatised state".

A radical solution is called for, says the report, involving:

- **the transfer of huge sums of money from taxpayers to the NSPCS**
- **all parents to be arrested**
- **all toddlers to be taken into care**
- **toddlers to be properly looked after in secure institutions under the expert care of highly trained paedophiles** *(surely 'caring social workers'? Ed)*.

LATE NEWS

Tony Blair, God said that this was a personal matter for him and not to be taken as gospel.

God to stand in next General Election

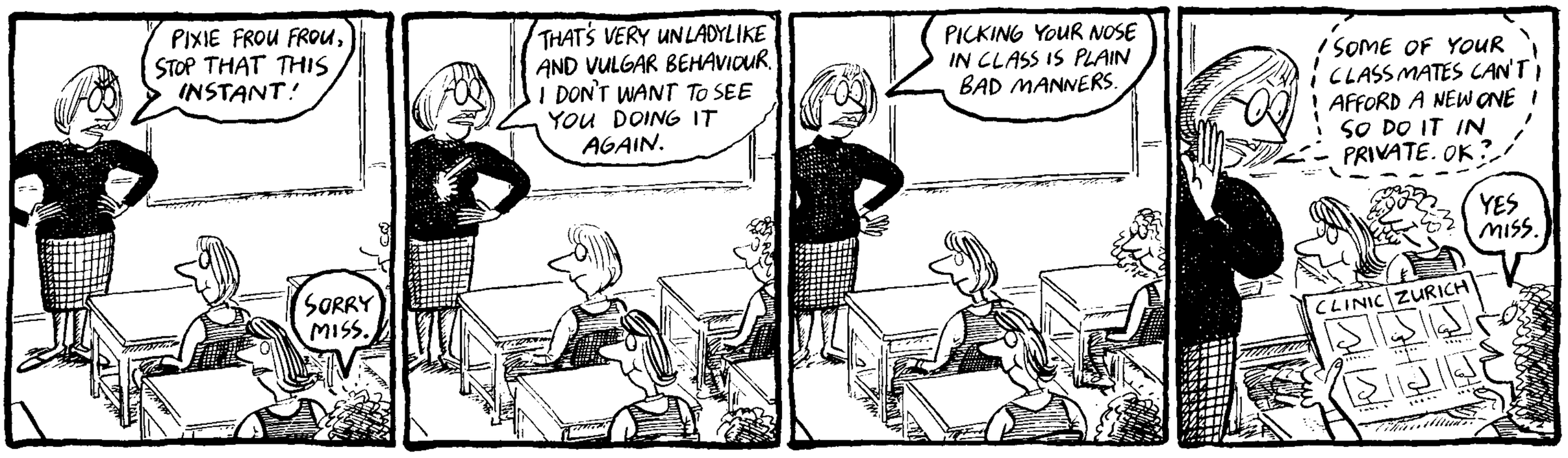
IN A shock move, the previously politically neutral figure, God, has announced he will be standing for parliament in next year's general election. Spokesmen for God have said that he will be standing in the relatively safe seat of Moral High Ground North-South-East-West. Although he admitted "believing" in John Major and

Jerry seeks divorce

THE former animated film star, Jerry Mouse, is seeking a divorce from his long time partner, Tom Cat, because of reported infidelity. So far this month Tom has been linked with a series of other cartoon characters, including Minnie Mouse. Said a spokesman for Jerry: "It is so sad when a tired old tomcat such as himself begins chasing other mice around the house, and we all know how it will all end, don't we? With Tom either impaling himself on a large hatpin or running face first into a hot iron, which will disfigure him for two frames."

Celeb

LIGGER


PIXIE FROU FROU, STOP THAT THIS INSTANT!
SORRY MISS.
THAT'S VERY UNLADYLIKE AND VULGAR BEHAVIOUR. I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU DOING IT AGAIN.
PICKING YOUR NOSE IN CLASS IS PLAIN BAD MANNERS.
SOME OF YOUR CLASSMATES CAN'T AFFORD A NEW ONE SO DO IT IN PRIVATE. OK?
YES MISS.
CLINIC ZURICH

The Book of Benjamin

Chapter 94

1. And, lo, there was a man called Chi-rac, who ruled over the land of the Frank, wherein dwelleth the eaters of garlic and of the snail that creepeth and the legs of the frog.
2. And Chi-rac girdeth up his loins and came unto the land of Israel, saying: "Blessed am I, for I am an Peacemaker.
3. "For I, Chi-rac, come in the name of the people of Eu, that I may bring the olive branch between the children of Israel and the Arab-ites, the Araf-ites, the Hamas-ites and all the other -ites."
4. And when he heard that this thing had come to pass, Ben-jam-in, that is called Nettanyahu, waxed wroth and sayeth unto the children of Israel:
5. "This Chi-rac, who doth he think he is?
6. "It is time these people of the land of Eu were taught a lesson, that is to say that no one careth what they thinketh about anything, no more than the leopard careth that the flea crawleth through his fur in the noonday sun."
7. And when Chi-rac cometh unto Jer-usalem, even unto the Holy City, he fain would walketh in the streets to press the flesh of the Arab-ites.
8. But when Ben-jamin saw this, he sendeth his guards privily unto Chi-rac, saying unto them: "Go forth and stand in the way of Chi-rac and vex him mightily, that he may loseth his rag."
9. So the guards went forth, and did as Ben-jamin had commanded, and verily the rag of Chi-rac was lost just as had been foretold, and he cried aloud: "Knowest thou not who I am?"
10. And they answereth him: "Thou art Chi-rac the Troublemaker, friend of the Araf-ites and eater of the unclean legs of the frog.
12. "Consider thyself lucky that we do not give you a damn good smiting, as is our wont."
13. And then Ben-jamin came forward and sayeth: "My friend, what is thy problem? Why dost thou rant and rage?
14. "These men are here only to protect you from the wiles of the Araf-ites."
15. And then Ben-jamin handeth to Chi-rac a cup of sweet Negev dessert wine and fell upon him saying: "You are my friend and my brother."
16. But in his heart Ben-jamin sayeth: "when this fool hath departed, we shall once again begin the smiting."

(To be continued)

HOT TICKETS

THEATRE

EDWARD HEATHCLIFF

starring Sir Cliff Richard
as Sir Edward Heath

NOW, at last — the multi-million-pound musical that tells the romantic story of the dark tormented former Prime Minister Edward Heathcliff. Experience for yourself the dark, tormented *(You've done this, Ed)* Heathcliff roaming around the Houses of Parliament shouting desperately at his lost obsession: "Maggie! Maggie!"

The part of the doomed bachelor is brilliantly played by Sir Cliff Richard who conveys the helplessness and the tragedy of the dark, tormented *(You really HAVE done this, Ed)*.

Hit songs include:

● *Bachelor Boy* ● ***Summer Holiday at Broadstairs*** ● *Living Grocer* ● ***Congratulations*** (Winner of the European Single Market Contest 1972)

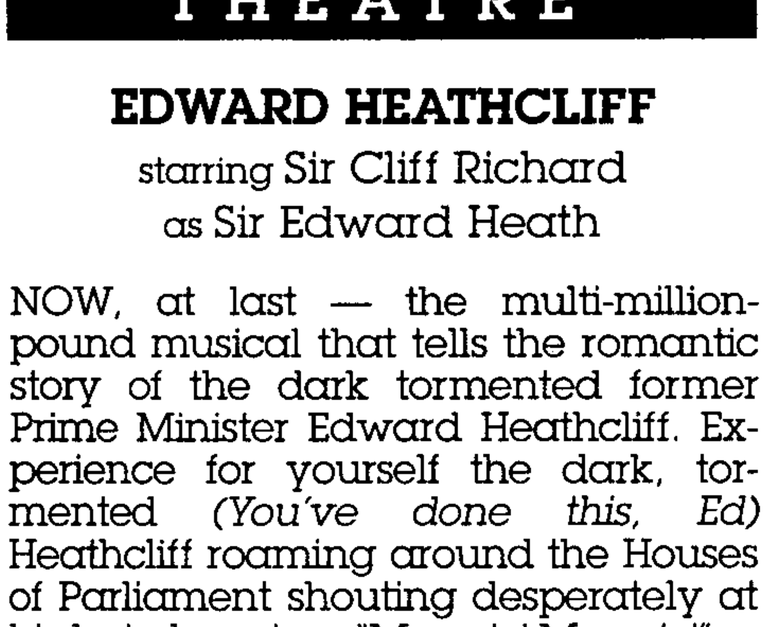
FILM

Colin Wallace and Gromit in
A CLOSE SHAVE

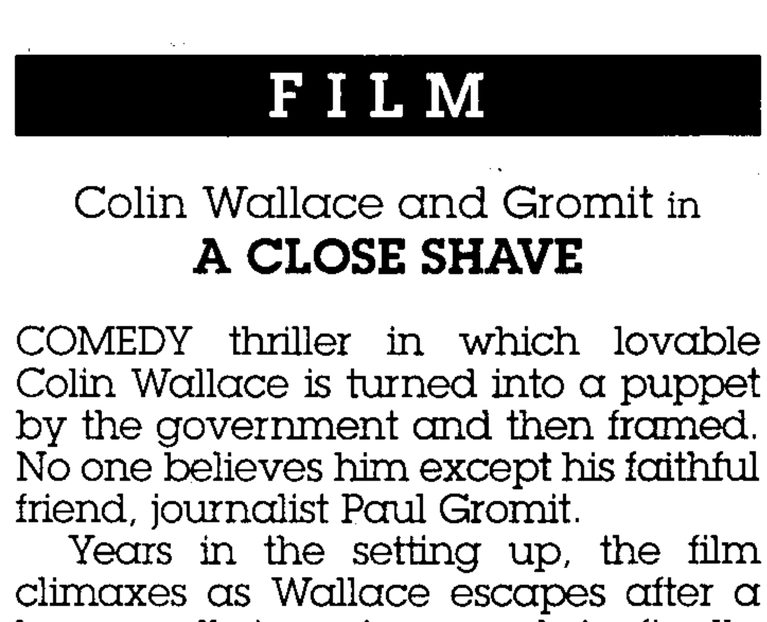
COMEDY thriller in which lovable Colin Wallace is turned into a puppet by the government and then framed. No one believes him except his faithful friend, journalist Paul Gromit.

Years in the setting up, the film climaxes as Wallace escapes after a long spell in prison and is finally awarded compensation and has his conviction quashed.

The Truth about Tough Street Talk



Tough Street Talk



Translation

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam Dempsters Magazine and Mark Lawson's Beard

So. Farewell
Then. Dempsters
Magazine.

The brainchild
Of Nigel
Dempster
Which lasted
Only two
Issues.

And farewell
Also the
Famous late
Show presenter's
Beard.

Both of you
Were cut
Off with
No warning.

And in both
Cases it
Is a great
Improvement.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

World of Cheese

THUMBS DOWN TO HIS ROYAL 'HIGH'NESS!

By Our Cheese Correspondent **Gorgonzola Budd**

A NEW survey shows that the British public have decisively rejected HRH Prince Cheese.

The Royal "Blue" has been available for some years, and has been heavily promoted as a good, wholesome, traditional family cheese.

But recently the punters have turned up their noses at Chezza, claiming that he "smells a bit funny" and that they don't really fancy him.

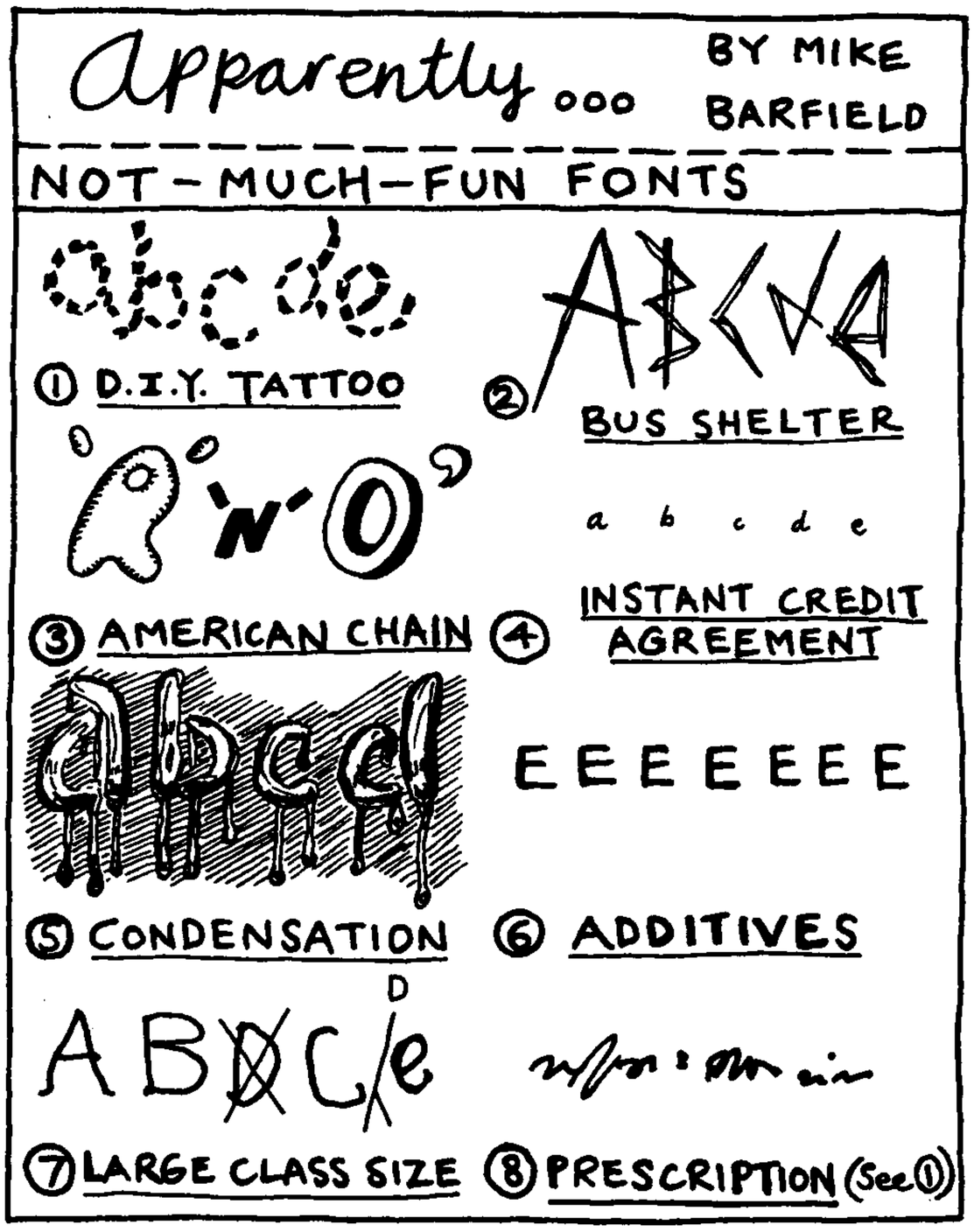
Camillambert

Said one former cheese fancier, Mrs Princess Diana of Wales: "I had Chezza once or twice before I went to sleep but I ended up having nightmares."

But promotion manager Jonathan Dimblebrie hit back, saying: "I am sure the public will come round to our product in the end. He matures with age and needs to be kept for at least 70 years before he is fit for public consumption."

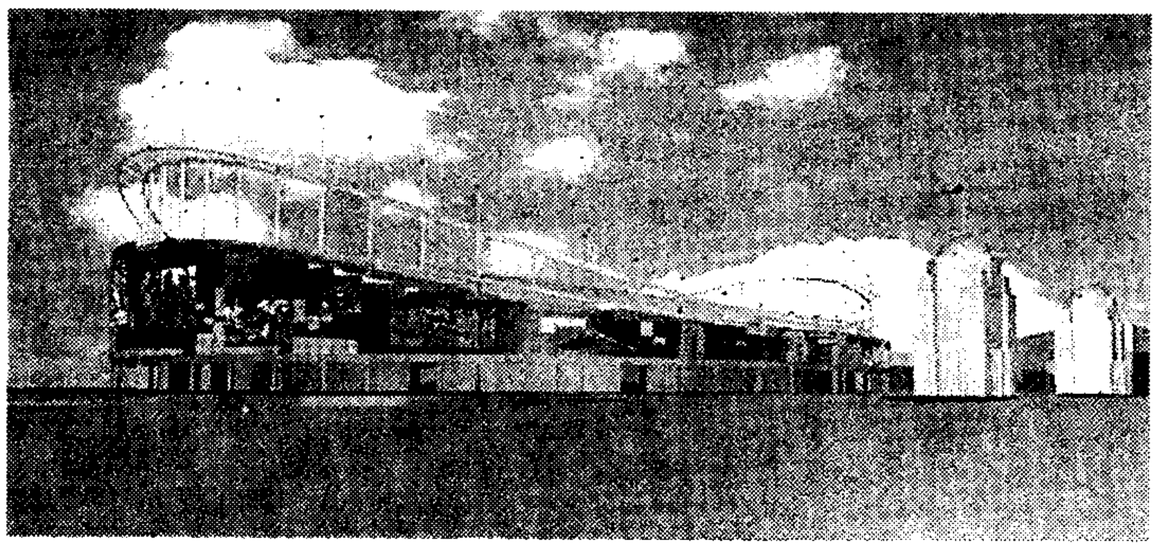
Those Royal Cheeses you *do* want:

1. PRINCEZZAN
2. Er...
3. That's it.



SOCCER

YES! IT'S NATIONAL NEASDEN!



How It Will Look — The Neasden Bridge Of Tomorrow

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man With The Cement Mixer And The Hard Hat

THE SOCCER world was rocked to its foundations last night when the governing bodies of football, Rugby League and Athletics named Neasden Bridge as the sports stadium of the future.

Insiders had predicted that Manchester would scoop the £200 million investment, but last night the Neasden management were jubilant.

We're On Our Way To Neasden!

Said Chairman Brigadier Sir Buffy Cohen: "This has taken years of careful planning, but the envelope that I sent in with my bid contained the following message — *Neasden is in the heart of London and Manchester isn't.* Not surprisingly, we won."

How They Might Not Be Related Anymore

Mick Jagger	**Jerry Hall**
Sir Roland Stone	Albert Hall
Sir Michael Rollingston	Annie Hall
Michael de Jaeger	Jerry and the Moneymakers
Jaeger for Men	Ben 'n' Jerry
Michael Jaguar	Jerry Xmas
"Jumping" Jagger Flashgit	Bryan Jerry
Mick Shagger	Jerry Major-Ball
Michael Jackson	Jerry Hayes MP

SUPERMODELS

KERBER

VIVIENNE WESTWOOD JOHN GALLIANO, + ALEXANDER McQUEEN
SO YOU'RE NOT UPSET THAT WE GOT THE TOP PARIS JOBS AND YOU DIDN'T ?
NO
WE THOUGHT YOU MAY WANT TO SEEK REVENGE !
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T GET ANY SILLY IDEAS !
REALLY ?..... SO WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR A LIVING ?

DIARY

Life's been a rollercoaster ride, firing on all cylinders. But it hasn't always been easy, let me assure you. When my toffee-nosed enemies and their snooty chums have tried to scramble aboard my rollercoaster I've not cared two pins about stamping on their fingers again and again with the steel caps of my well-polished boots. And let me tell you this: it's been a real pleasure watching them with their snooty tail-coats flying as they tumble to their doom.

Make no mistake. It's me against them and them against me. That's the English Establishment for you: full of hatred for those better-off than themselves. They hate the way I challenge their feather-bedded world of privilege. The truth of this came clear to me only yesterday, while out shopping in Harrods for a favourite vintage champagne. I took my bottle to the counter.

"Who you starin' at?" I then inquired of the assistant.

In his ridiculous cut-glass tones, redolent of centuries of privilege and unearned upper-crust wealth, he muttered something about only wishing to help.

"I suppose Mr Snootypants here thinks I'm not fit to buy my champagne in the so-called Top People's Store — is that it? Eh? EH?" I said, and then I turned on the other second-rate nobs in the queue. I could see that they were all in it together. "And who are you starin' at, you pampered Old School Tie talentless twits? My money's as good as yours, you pompous bastards! You all belong to the past — and *I* am the future!"

Phew. That showed 'em. It had been an exhausting rollercoaster of a day. I'd already had the same sort of toffee-nosed trouble from chinless wonders in the dry-cleaners, the post office and the bakers. I emerged from my day's shopping firmly convinced that, for all the dramatic changes I had wrought as Editor of The Sunday Times, the English Establishment was fighting back, and fighting dirty. But they'll never win against Andrew Neil. "Pansies! Daffs! Anenomes!" shouted the flower-seller in the street as he saw me passing. But it was a competition he could never hope to win. I showed him what for and let me tell you this — he won't be repeating those snobby insults in a hurry. And they say his career will never recover.

Life in the 1980s was a rollercoaster ride — but I wasn't scared to ruffle Establishment feathers. On The Sunday Times, I broke many scoops of which I have every right to be proud,

We are sorry that we were unable to find a photograph of this week's subject.

ANDREW NEIL

and no one can tell me I can't, or they'll find out what it is to cross swords with Andrew Neil —

● In 1983, we revealed that HRH Princess Margaret was a high-level Soviet plant with a secret mission to destroy our democratic government. They say her career never recovered.

● In 1985, we scooped the world to reveal that Sky Television was now the number one rated television station in the world — a view reinforced by a private poll of our formidable team of top-ranking News International executives.

● In 1986, we exclusively serialised the Secret Diaries of the Loch Ness Monster — thus putting paid to a Government cover-up that had denied the existence of this monster at the very heart of the Establishment for nearly 100 years.

● In 1988, we revealed that TV supremo Des O'Connor was tipped for the top job in British Nuclear Electric. My hard-hitting editorial spelt it out: "To appoint a superannuated television crooner to the top job in nuclear energy is nothing short of madness," I wrote. My words must have struck at the very heart of Establishment decision-making. Sure enough, no more was ever heard of the matter again. They say his career never recovered.

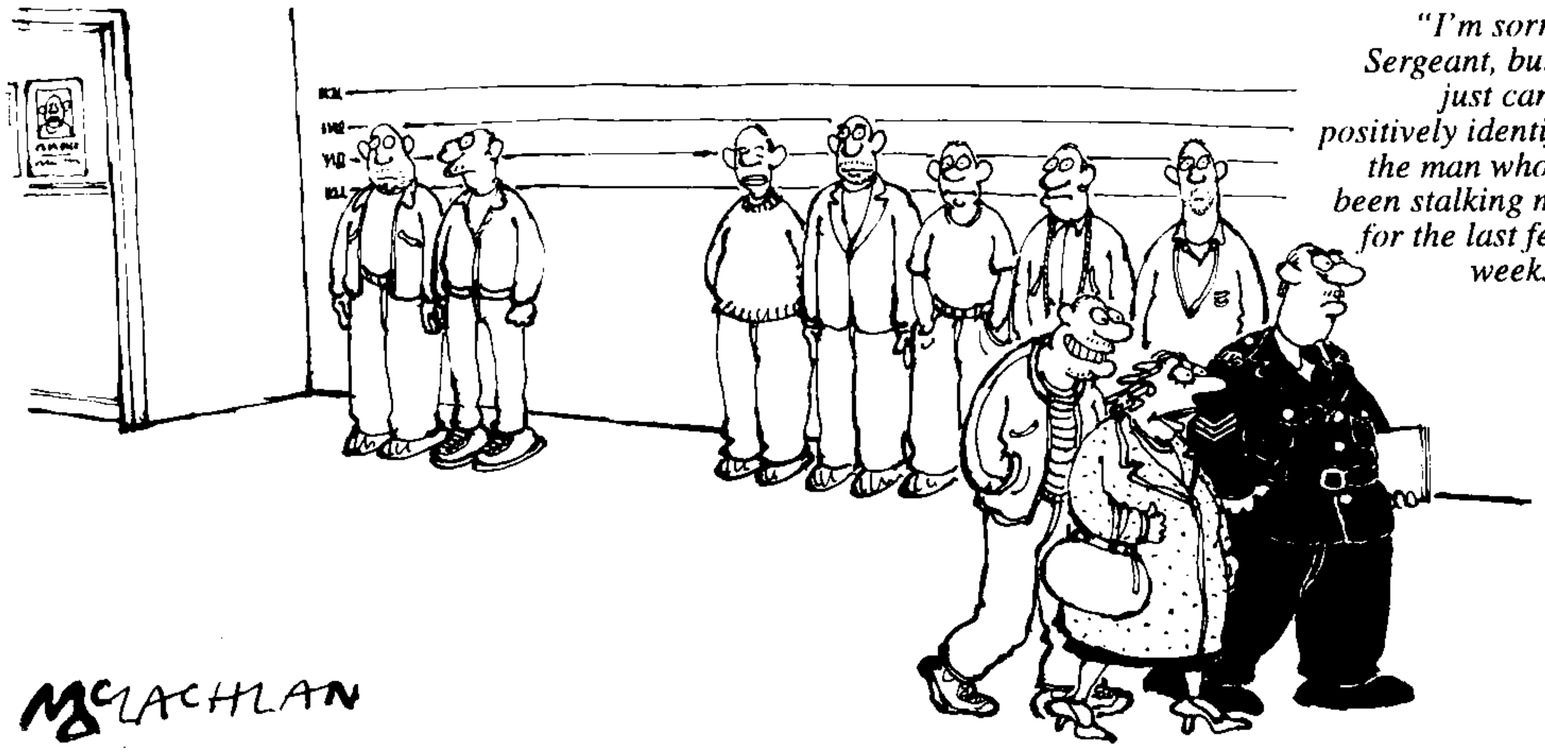
I achieved all this — and more — because I had no time for the pathetic blandishments and baubles of a decadent English Establishment. As Mr Murdoch himself said at an exclusive dinner-party given in my honour in a luxury private suite in the top-ranking Dorchester Hotel, attended by many senior Government ministers and high-powered media commentators: "Neil — you have no need for fol-de-rols. You've shown us all the true meaning of editorial independence. You've always fought tooth and nail for your right to say exactly what I think — and my god I respect you for it!"

Bold words, indeed — but life at the Court of the Sun King was not always plain sailing. Those who survive a decade at Rupert's court have to be totally loyal to their master, kow-towing to his every whim. Not me. For ten years, whenever he entered the room, I made a point of standing up to the man. "Be seated," he would eventually say. But I would insist on my absolute right as editor to remain on my knees, pursuing my own agenda. In retrospect, perhaps I was too keen to assert my independence, but I always made a display of unbuckling his trousers and spending a reasonable measure of my own time independently licking away at the behind of this Jekyll-and-Hyde character with my rough and gritty anti-Establishment tongue.

But over the years Rupert was to become increasingly jealous of my power. Colleagues informed me he was green with envy at the way I singlehandedly brought down the Berlin Wall and sick to the gills that I had been able to appoint the next President of the USA in a hard-hitting Sunday Times editorial. I daresay he was also bitterly jealous of my skiing activities, and of my well-publicised success with the lovely ladies in my life. We were at daggers drawn — but it was a battle Rupert could never hope to win. You see, by this time I had established myself an effective alternative power-base as presenter of one of London's most influential early morning radio phone-in programmes; it was from here that I was to plot Rupert's overthrow. Eventually things came to a head. "You're fired!" he said. He had walked straight into my trap.

A year before, I had secretly invested in a John Bull Printing Outfit, complete with every letter of the alphabet. I was thus able to write, print and publish my very own miniature Sunday Times, week in, week out, from my own power-base on the kitchen table. It has been going nearly three years now. I can assure you it has the toffee-nosed English Establishment running scared. They're terrified that one day it'll find its way on to the news-stands — and then they'll have to beg for mercy. And what does Rupert Murdoch, the Sun King himself, think of my new power? The guy's so terrified, he hasn't mentioned me to a living soul in three years.

And some say his career has never recovered.



"I'm sorry, Sergeant, but I just can't positively identify the man who's been stalking me for the last few weeks"

a whole area of literature and human understanding is closed to us, and many intelligent persons nowadays fail to see why thinking is important. For them, it is as though Pluto, Aquinas, Descartes, Hegel or Wittgenstein had never been.

A.N. Wilson – Evening Standard

Oliver Reed and Dean Martin have been shorthand for inebriation for nearly 30 years. Will the comparison outlive them or might more contemporary topers — Tony Adams, say, or Paul Merton— be called off the cultural substitutes' bench?

Grauniad

Literary Review

Will anyone, er, Byatt?

The Witch of Exmoor
Margaret Drabble
(Viking, £16)

LIKE another Margaret in her generation, the author of *A Summer Birdcage* and *The Millstone* has found herself in the difficult position of being the sister of a British institution.

But whereas Princess Margaret always knew that her sister would eventually eclipse her, Margaret Drabble was taken by surprise. A star novelist when our Antonia was just a struggling academic, she has seen her sibling surpass her in middle-age. Now A.S. Byatt has ascended to the throne of middle-class English letters — winning the Booker, hitting the bestseller lists — leaving Margaret as mere sister of the queen.

Many have wondered how Drabble might feel about all this and now her 12th novel, *The Witch Of Exmoor*, provides an answer. Three of the elements of the book are standard late Drabble but the fourth is something quite new: a sorority pillow-fight.

Let's begin with the familiar. Three traits have been increasingly present in Drabble's fiction since *The Middle Ground* back in the early 80s. The first is a prose heavy with lists and repetitions. So, two thirds into the new book, you get: "The water laps and sucks, sucks and laps. The green weed stirs and rises, rises and falls." This defiance of the generally-accepted rule of good writing that the same word should not occur twice in succession may be intended to suggest the arbitrary nature of word-selection but it gives the impression instead of a writer who has lost her thesaurus in a house move.

But the writer's uncertainty about words must be set alongside her gathering doubts about the entire form of the novel. Her last book, *The Gates Of Ivory*, began with the ominously disclaiming sentence: "This is a novel — if novel it be — about..." In *The Witch Of Exmoor*, the author keeps leaning over the scenery to say "I don't have a view on this, I am simply reporting facts" or "We have visited the Palmers' house and so pleasant is it there that we may be unable to resist going to see them at least once more". Characters reflect on what their fate might be "if this were a novel". This is tedious. Priests who stop believing should leave the church, but perhaps that is the point. Much of *The Witch Of Exmoor* reads like a 275-page resignation letter from fiction.

Fact, anyway, is crowding in as we witness Mag's evolution into Magpie Drabble. Her last four novels have been stuffed with anecdotes and newspaper cuttings, dotted around the text to such an extent that this lady writer of a certain age may unexpectedly be producing the first true Internet novels. In this one, you get facts about the "black-Asian population of Somerset", Radon pollution, the death penalty in Jamaica, Suzy Lamplugh, the Marchioness disaster, BSE. There are some wacky facts about G.B. Shaw — breakfast table droppings, presumably, from Shaw's biographer, Michael Holroyd, Drabble's husband — and some stuff about Angus Wilson, whose *Life* has just been published by Drabble herself.

But another English novelist who has heavily influenced Drabble's novel maintains a more surreptitious presence. Sisters litter the book. In the younger generation of London professionals, there are Rosemary and Grace: one sexy, one frigid. In the older generation, there are Frieda and Everhilda: one "fair and delicate", one "plain and dull". One nearly kills the other in a fit of sibling jealousy. In fact, the book might have been titled, with an echo of Kingsley Amis, *Difficulties With Sisters*. A propos almost nothing, a character reflects that "Fairy stories were all the rage these days... feminist fairy stories, oriental fairy stories". Curiously enough, among the recent output of the writer A.S. Byatt was *The Djinn In The Nightingale's Eye*, a volume of feminist and oriental fairytales.

But Drabble will not be interested in these comments for — in perhaps her most unwise intervention in the text — she dismisses literary critics as "ignorant little oafs". Many critics have assumed that the score being settled here is the poor reviews of some recent Drabble titles. But, given the book's sisterly sub-text, you have to wonder whether the writer might not also have in mind the rather warm reception of books by another female writer of her generation.

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

☐ **THE burning literary question of the moment is: how good is Martin Amis as a tennis tipster?**

Poor Martin has been spurned by the book-buying public (see *Eyes passim* **on the dismal sales of his novel** *The Information*), **but seems to be more worried about the credibility of his coverage of Wimbledon in the** *Evening Standard* **— for which he was said to have been paid £2,000 an article.**

The *Daily Telegraph* **suggested that Amis's attempts at punditry had caused a curious sound to be heard in the Wimbledon press boxes: "the sound of dozens of professional sports writers sniggering in unison". Then David Sexton (D.S.) in the** *Times Literary Supplement* **reported on the issue. Amis replied that Sexton's comments betrayed "the amusement of a certain lower paid literary gossip", along with "befuddlement, plus the usual other stuff". Sexton replied. Amis wrote in again: "Are D. and S. your correspondent's initials, or are they just short for Dishonest?" Dear me. It's only a game.**

At issue is whether Amis had predicted that Andre Agassi would win Wimbledon. In the *Standard*, **Amis had written: "In my view, Agassi remains the most likely player to clinch the Chunnel double [Wimbledon and the French Open]". As maligned Mart points out, this tip did not fall down when Agassi was knocked out in the first round, because Agassi had** *already* **won Wimbledon.**

One might comment that Amis has learned the astrologer's trick of making a prediction that, when examined, turns out to predict not very much at all. Or one might look at what Amis wrote next. "Kafelnikov may pre-empt him, this year... Otherwise, there's the dangerously thwarted figure of Courier, the indefatigable Chang..." None of these players has won Wimbledon, so it seems fair to assume Amis thought they might do well in 1996. But they were knocked out in the first round too.

As a tennis correspondent, Martin Amis makes a very good writer on literary jealousy.

■ *WHO has bought the memoirs of Channel Four's boss Michael Grade which have been floating round the publishing world? Georgina Capel is Grade's agent and she has been pushing for a ridiculously large advance of more than £200,000 for Greed's book.*

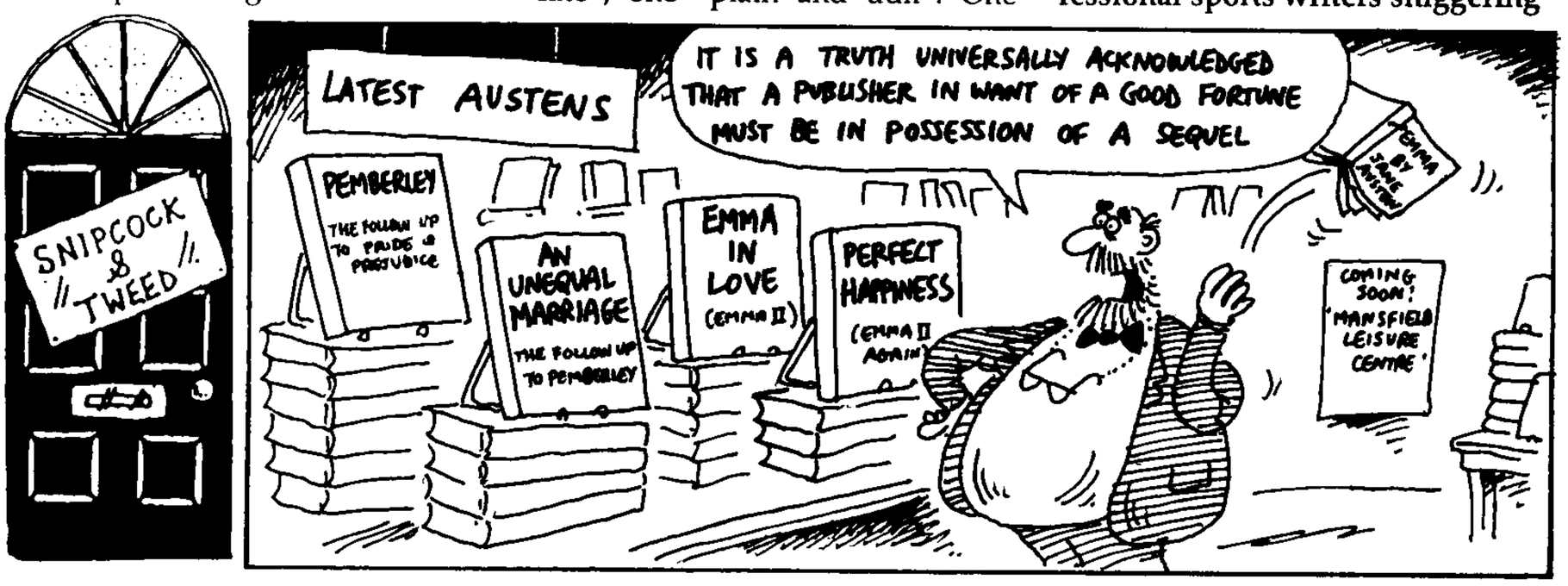
HarperCollins has now backed out of negotiations, apparently leaving Macmillan and Orion. Both have gone over the £250,000 mark in their bids, but the smart money is on Orion winning the bidding war — not least because it is run by Anthony Cheetham, boyfriend of one Georgina Capel.

☐ WHAT has happened to Penny Junor's shameless hagiography of the prime minister, first published as *The Major Enigma* (Michael Joseph, 1993), but which is now called *John Major, from Brixton to Downing Street*?

Curiously the 1996 version has certain omissions. It no longer says that "millions of people in Britain are only too familiar with the frustrations of queuing in seedy surgeries, or waiting for hours in a benefit office", or that "The overall impression... has been of a deeply divided party, a government in chaos." Reference to the "underclass" with "poor, if any, housing, no jobs, no self-respect and no hope" has simply vanished. And where are those Downing Street messengers who "whistled merrily", even though "the situation was bad"? Gone!

Three years ago Junor had two and a half pages on the arms-to-Iraq scandal. Today? One masterly sentence: "Labour were able to make capital out of the Scott report." While an author's note stresses that much is based on Major's interpretation or memory, it should be remembered that brown-nosing runs in Junor family: her father Sir John was knighted for services to the Thatching industry.

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
LATEST AUSTENS
IT IS A TRUTH UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT A PUBLISHER IN WANT OF A GOOD FORTUNE MUST BE IN POSSESSION OF A SEQUEL
PEMBERLEY
THE FOLLOW UP TO PRIDE & PREJUDICE
AN UNEQUAL MARRIAGE
THE FOLLOW UP TO PEMBERLEY
EMMA IN LOVE
(EMMA II)
PERFECT HAPPINESS
(EMMA II AGAIN)
EMMA BY JANE AUSTEN
COMING SOON! 'MANSFIELD LEISURE CENTRE'

footnotes

STAGG HUNTING

THREE whole pages of the *Mail on Sunday* on 20 October (and two more on 27 October) were devoted to reviving "the case against Colin Stagg the jury never heard".

This "case" — that Colin Stagg stabbed Rachel Nickell to death on Wimbledon Common in front of her young son — was angrily chucked out two years ago by Mr Justice Ognall. A young woman police officer befriended Stagg and offered him sexual excitement if he told her he'd done the murder. She told Stagg that the only time she'd had an orgasm was when a man had told her about the sacrificial knifing of a blonde woman, and begged him to tell her something similar.

Stagg did not confess and the judge ruled that even if he had, a confession made under such obvious entrapment would have been inadmissible as evidence. The prosecution team at once threw in the towel. Without Stagg's conversations with his blackmailing "girlfriend", there was no case against him. The *Mail on Sunday*, however, knew better. It listed what it called "an account of evidence gathered by the police about what was alleged to have happened" on Wimbledon Common on 15 July 1992.

There was no approach to Stagg or his defence lawyers before the article was published. There was no room for any of the 55 defence witnesses who had challenged the prosecution case at every point. There was no attempt at independent analysis of the evidence — just a series of statements gathered by the police for the prosecution.

THE IDENTIFICATION: The main witness, Jane Harriman, saw a man she thought looked suspicious on Wimbledon Common on the morning of the murder. The *Mail* reported that she picked out Stagg from an identity parade. The *Mail* did not report that her two boys, aged 13 and 11, both of whom saw the man, did not pick Stagg out from the parade. The *Mail* paraded another eyewitness, Amanda Phelan, who saw a man on the Common washing his hands in a drainage ditch. The *Mail* suggests that this man was the murderer but does not report that Mrs Phelan did not pick out Colin Stagg either — nor that Mrs Phelan was not even called by the prosecution to give evidence at the committal hearings.

THE BLACK BAG: Mrs Harriman was quite certain that the man she saw was carrying a black PVC bag with straps. Prodigious efforts were made by the police to establish that Stagg ever had such a bag. But he hadn't. The *Mail on Sunday* got round this by saying Mrs Harriman described the bag on her suspect as a bum bag. She said nothing of the kind. This was a *Mail* invention to fit in with the evidence of another witness that Stagg was wearing a bum bag on the morning of the murder.

THE VICTIM'S SON: The *Mail* made much of how "detectives were impressed" with the "recall" of the victim's three-year-old son, Alex. The suggestion was that Alex's description of the man who murdered his mother fitted Colin Stagg. Nowhere did the *Mail* reveal what it knew perfectly well: that Alex had named another man, not Stagg, as the murderer.

ONCE THEIR HERO: *Colin Stagg and the press*

THE BUTCHER AND THE NEWSAGENT: The *Mail* made great play with the statements of a butcher (Pat Heanan) and a newsagent (Yadnesh Patel) that Stagg had come into their shops that morning and mentioned that a young woman had been murdered on the Common. How could he have known that so soon? asked the *Mail* triumphantly. The answer is simple. Soon after the body was found, the Common was surrounded by hundreds of police who told anyone who asked that a young woman had been murdered. The first statements of Heanan and Patel quoted by the *Mail* were followed up by others from both of them which were much more equivocal about the timings, and not damaging to Stagg. Heanan and Patel were considered such weak witnesses they were not even called to give evidence at the committal proceedings. That fact, and their additional statements, were not reported by the *Mail*.

THE BLOOD: Early police reports just after the murder said that the murderer would be "saturated in blood". No one saw any blood on Stagg nor was there the smallest speck of blood found in his flat or on his clothes or belongings. By the time police pathologist Richard Shepperd gave evidence at the committal proceedings, he suggested that the attacker might have had very little blood on him. This evidence coincided neatly with that of the key prosecution witness, the "psychological profiler" Paul Britton. Britton drew up a "profile" of the killer: a local man who would have attacked his victim from behind and from the side, and thus kept out of the reach of her blood.

Shepperd originally told magistrates on oath that he had never seen Paul Britton's profile of the murderer. Whoops! The prosecution immediately disclosed a record of a conference at which Shepperd had been told in detail about Britton's profile. Shepperd had to change his story. This was so embarrassing for the prosecution that its two barristers, Nigel Sweeney QC and William Boyce, had to withdraw from the case so they could be witnesses for the defence.

THE ENTRAPMENT: The hearings before the stipendiary magistrate at Wimbledon, whose transcripts were available to the *Mail*, exposed the bankruptcy of the prosecution case. There was no forensic evidence of any kind to implicate Stagg. After his arrest, he answered every question. The police took 520 pages of notes and still had got nothing but denials. The prosecution's only hope was "Lizzie James", the fake girlfriend offering her body for a confession.

Naturally, Stagg, who was quickly hooked on his lovely new "girlfriend", did his best to impress her. He noticed that she was happy when he talked about the Nickell murder, so he did so. The *Mail* make much of Stagg's description to "Lizzie" of Rachel Nickell "with her hands crossed as if in prayer beneath her head". How, asks the *Mail* triumphantly, could Stagg have known that unless he was the murderer?

The defence team exposed what Mr Justice Ognall called "a discrepancy" in this argument. "The hands of the victim," said the judge, "are not palm to palm at all. The arms are in fact crossed at the wrist so that the hands barely touch". Here was proof not of a confession but an invention by Stagg to impress "Lizzie's" insatiable desire for information about the murder which he hadn't got.

THE PRESS: The entire press mocked Stagg's attempt on the day after the *Mail* story to make money out of any refutation he might give them. There was no reference to the obscene scramble for Stagg's exclusive story after his acquittal — a story for which Stagg was paid £40,000 by the *News of the World*. Nor could the *Mail* find space for the condition the *News of the World* laid down before paying the money: that Stagg take a lie detector test. He passed.

THE MOTIVE: The case against Stagg was a disgrace even the legal establishment wants to forget. The police responsible were replaced by a new team which has been trying to follow up the many genuine leads abandoned by their predecessors. Asked why the story had been revived, Stagg's barrister James Sturman replied: "This was the *Mail on Sunday* trying to titivate Middle England."

Index fingered

■ **THE current issue of *Index on Censorship* concentrates on censorship in Britain's most valuable ally, Saudi Arabia.**

Thoughtfully, the editors sent 20 copies "for information and distribution" to the British embassy in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, c/o Mrs Patricia McKelvey, the community liaison officer. She passed the copies on to the press and public relations officer, Dominic McAllister, who replied on 12 October as follows:

"Saudi Arabia has strict censorship rules concerning any publications entering the country. It would be inappropriate to circumvent these rules by distributing your publication uncensored out of the embassy or British Council. Please let me know whether you wish us to return the copies of *Index on Censorship* you have supplied."

IMRO CAN

IT HAS been an embarrassing time for Charles Nunneley, chairman of the National Trust, chairman of the Nationwide building society — and chairman of the board of IMRO, the investment management regulator.

The merchant banking world is still reeling from a series of enormous fines imposed by IMRO on Jardine Fleming, the Hong Kong investment house, whose chairman was barred from ever again managing any fund; on three fund managers at London bankers Robert Fleming, which hold half the shares in Jardine Fleming; and on Save and Prosper Equity Managers, a subsidiary of Robert Fleming.

CHAIRMAN: *Get the to a... Nunneley*

Fines of nearly £1 million were imposed for various offences including gross mishandling of client accounts and Leeson-style gambling on the Japanese stock market. The embarrassment for Mr Nunneley is that for almost all the time the offences were being committed he was a director of Robert Fleming.

A spokeswoman for IMRO revealed to the *Eye* that in the course of the investigation into Fleming's and its subsidiaries, chairman Nunneley was interviewed by his own investigators. "We would always interview right up to the very top," she said, "even if the queen was on the board." Was it right, though, that a man should stay on as chairman of a regulator which was investigating the activities of his former company? "That is quite common," she replied. "It is part of practitioner involvement." IMRO, she explained, has several "practitioner directors" from the industry which is being regulated. If their firms are investigated, they "step aside and play no part in the investigation." Should Mr Nunneley resign? "No," came the reply. "He has been completely exonerated."

At the same time that Mr Nunneley was not resigning because of possible conflict of interest, another IMRO director was resigning because of, er, possible conflict of interest. Graham Kane, managing director of Morgan Grenfell's unit trust division, joined the IMRO board on 24 July. Almost at once IMRO started an investigation into... the unit trust division of Morgan Grenfell. Mr Kane resigned. Why? "Because of our ongoing investigation," said the IMRO spokeswoman. Why did Mr Kane resign when Mr Nunneley didn't? Answer: "Because Mr Kane was at the very heart of what we are investigating."

Mr Nunneley's close involvement in firms so heavily fined by the regulator whose board he chairs has irritated IMROs' full-time chief executive Phillip Thorpe. Rather like the pensions ombudsman Julian Farrand (see *Eye* 890), Phillip Thorpe is making himself unpopular in the City of London by doing his job properly.

His swingeing fines this month on four companies who mis-sold pensions — Godwins, Willis Corroon, C.E. Heath and Alexanders — have produced a deluge of outraged letters and even a critical editorial in the trade mag, *Money Marketing*. The protesters prefer the more lenient approach of the Personal Investment Agency (PIA) which regulates most pension-selling firms. Thorpe's stricter policies seem to work, however. Under the lash of his fines, most of the pension-swindling firms he regulates will have compensated their victims by the end of the year. Meanwhile, the PIA, which has identified 563,000 cases of the most blatant pensions swindling, have compensated only 3,000. When it comes to City swindlers, the big stick works quicker and better than the soft soap.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: *Phillip Thorpe*

"SIGN AWAY YOUR RIGHTS OR ELSE": *The Magnet pickets' answer*

Magnet: Poles apart

■ CAN YOU spot any differences between these two groups in the same firm?

1) Three hundred workers at Magnet, a factory in Darlington which makes kitchen equipment, are on strike. For the three years since their company was taken over by Berisford PLC, the entire Magnet workforce promised not to submit a pay claim while the company made a loss. They stuck it out through years of inflation on an average pay of about £300 a week. Their sacrifice is one of the main reasons for the turnaround in Berisford's fortunes.

Consistent losses were turned in 1995 into profits of £27 million. The directors expressed their "sincere thanks to all who have served the company so well". The workers duly asked for a modest 3 percent pay rise. The company agreed the rise for less than half the workforce: 160 workers were then told they could have nothing — and could not expect a penny on their pay until at least 2003. The workers held a ballot, in which they voted two-to-one for a strike. A few days later, employers' letters were delivered by taxi to their homes. The workers were given a choice. They could a) sign an undertaking written out for them (illiterately) as follows: "I hereby confirm that I do not sympathise, support or wish to take part in, nor do I intend at any time in the future to sympathise support or take part in any of the industrial action currently being taken by the majority of the staff at Magnet"; or b) they would be sacked. Three hundred refused to sign and were sacked. The strike followed.

FAT, FATTER, FATTEST: *Alan Bowkett*

2) Since 1992, Berisford directors' pay has gone up every year: from £890,000 to £1,670,000. On joining the board, every director gets share options worth four times his salary. Chief executive Alan Bowkett, the man mainly responsible for industrial relations, gets twice his salary if the company is taken over and he has to resign. In the meantime he gets £357,000 a year, up £18,000 from last year. Company secretary Barry O'Connor, who is a member of the CBI's companies committee, got a rise of £500 a week bringing him to £197,000. When Berisford took over Wellbilt last year, Wellbilt's chief executive Marion Antonini got a golden hello of $1.1 million. Last year he got £589,000 in salary and bonus. The company report stated: "The motivation provided by such a contract was regarded as essential."

Andrew Kneel

■ ADMIRERS of former *Sunday Times* editor Andrew Neil should turn to page 357 of his vast self-eulogy where they will find the only reference to the shooting by the SAS of three unarmed IRA members in Gibraltar in 1988.

Neil writes: "We cast grave doubts on the veracity and accuracy of Thames's witnesses much to the fury of the UK broadcasters. In a series of articles amounting to 16,000 words we amassed evidence to show that if the SAS had killed these bombers in cold blood Thames TV were very far from proving it."

Is this all the great crusader can drum up from the thousands of words of abuse he printed about those witnesses, especially Carmen Proetta, an eyewitness to the shooting? Is this all he has to show for the long and arduous campaign of his faithful lawyer, Alastair "Blubber" Brett, to blacken the names of the Thames witnesses, even to the extent of paying £2,000 to convicted drug smuggler Joe Wilkins?

After the *Sunday Times* had apologised and shelled out enormous libel damages to Carmen Proetta, Neil continued his vendetta. On a late-night show on the Irish television station RTE he unleashed a volley of the old abuse which brought a libel writ screaming in from the Rock. RTE immediately conceded and shelled out damages. Furiously Neil, his anger stoked up from the coffers of the *Sunday Times*, declared his determination to fight to the end.

Could it be that his publisher, Macmillan, is not as angry or as brave as he is?

SHABBY NATIONAL

■ DOES the Abbey National discriminate against cancer patients? Yes, says the Abbey National, it does.

George Georgiou, who had eight years' banking experience, applied for a job as a customer service assistant and passed his interview with flying colours ("he was the best candidate for the job" — a company spokesman). Normally George would have been offered a staff job with sick pay, three weeks' holiday, etc. But the hawk-eyed Abbey National personnel department then noticed he'd had more than four days off in the previous year. It contacted his doctor, who disclosed that George had been treated for cancer of the lymph glands. He got a 12-month contract with 12 days holiday and no sick pay.

The Abbey freely admitted it treated cancer patients differently to other workers. "We wanted to take him on the staff but couldn't ignore his medical history," said a spokesman. George has left the company.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

THERE appears to be no end to the skeletons falling out of Peter Young's well-stocked cupboard at Morgan Grenfell. Hardly surprising given that for at least a year he was busily burying the bodies behind his Luxembourg labyrinth while creating an offshore pot of gold.

The next sizeable cadaver is likely to be Siberian oil producer Xavier Corporation, into which Young, via his accommodating Swedish friends at D. Carnegie, pumped £14 million as a two-year loan last December.

Xavier is currently seeking to raise a further $100 million through a convertible bond issue. It appears that "Polaroid" may have committed Morgan Grenfell to taking a big whack of this issue, perhaps up to $20 million. Ex-Young the bank, not surprisingly, has become reluctant to invest. However, Xavier claims that "Polaroid" committed the bank on paper to the deal. What will happen now may well rest with the lawyers — especially if Xavier does not raise the full $100 million and particularly if it does not attract the minimum $50 million required.

Xavier mirrors a similar situation with Ukraine Enterprise Corporation (UEC), currently seeking a listing on the Alberta stock exchange, the sleepy hollow where Xavier is also to be found. UEC claims Young agreed orally to take almost half the Can$44 million issue. Morgan Grenfell says there is no legal obligation to invest.

UEC came to believe Young and Morgan Grenfell were in as a result of statements made by his great friend Eric Langaker, of Fiba Nordic Securities, the brokers who also put Morgan Grenfell into Solv-Ex to the tune of more than $70 million, and Ashurst Technology, which has close ties with Ukraine, for $17 million.

Fiba had several million reasons to be grateful to Young. On the final Solv-Ex loan deal it earned a fee of $2.64 (£1.7) million. Not bad for a company which in 1994 had total revenues of £7.6 million.

Langaker, a founder director of Fiba, was Young's main man there. Another Fiba director was Bertil Hagman, also president of Swedish component developer SinterCast. Langaker was also a SinterCast director. Young invested at least £17 million in the company. Xavier and Ashurst were told Young was hot for Russian deals. So hot, indeed, it appears he would not — or was it could not? — say no.

Another Fiba connection which profited substantially from Young was Wyler & Wolf, the Swiss lawyers who created and managed all the Luxembourg letter box companies, including Russ Oil & Technology, which held Young's pot of gold. The two Zurich lawyers collected a minimum £3,000 a year apiece for being directors. But for more sensitive companies the fee was much larger. On Russ Oil it was £7,500 a year — but then there was obviously a lot to do.

Silva Investment, set up in the Caymans to buy one million Solv-Ex shares, paid £5,000 a year each to Wyler and Wolf. Silva was supposedly acting for a client of Morgan Grenfell in Jersey. That client was alternatively Herman, or Herbert, van Dalen. Young's wife is the former Harmanna van Dalen. She is understood to have a brother in Britain.

Who Herman or Herbert van Dalen is and why he wanted one million Solv-Ex shares — he ended up with 750,000 in the still all to prove oil from tar sands operation at a cost (to Morgan Grenfell) of $12.2 million — is unclear. Was Young simply using a name he knew well without knowledge or approval, or was there a more direct involvement by his wife and her relatives? In advance of any answers, Mrs Young has felt the need to retain the services of the (alleged) fraudsman's legal friend Peters & Peters. But then it is suggested she was also to be the possible beneficiary of another byzantine deal involving bonds issued by the Norwegian company SensorNor, another Carnegie deal.

Substantial funds washed into and out of the Luxembourg letter boxes and other offshore entities created for Young and managed by Wyler & Wolf. Almost $4 million in advance interest was paid by Solv-Ex to PheMex Establishment of Liechtenstein for making the $33 million loan. Someone also collected a $330,000 fee. PheMex in turn paid a near $2 million fee to Waferprod Holding in Luxembourg for providing the $33 million. This money in turn came from two further Morgan Grenfell owned letter boxes, Alulux Mining and Sandvest Petroleum, which received fees of $907,000 and $742,000. Strangely, or maybe not, no fees — only expenses — were paid by Russ Oil or Silva when they received $17 million of Morgan Grenfell money!

Young could be massively expensive for Morgan Grenfell's irate parent, Deutsche Bank. Already in for £180 million, it is suggested the German giant may have to make provisions of at least £400 million — and possibly up to £800 million — to cover the losses it faces in terms of investments written off and possible claims from investors and companies who did business with "Polaroid".

FURTHER proof that the alternative investment market (AIM) is well stocked with accidents just waiting to happen is news that none other than Alex Dembeniotis, late of the Department of Timidity & Inaction 1970s investigation into Scotia Investments, has resurfaced at Chartwell International Group.

Chartwell, which specialises in brokering Russian trade deals (although such deals have been thin on the ground so far), joined AIM a year ago. Dembeniotis was slated to become its deputy chairman until Chartwell adviser Neill Clerk Capital objected and gave notice of departure.

The former member of Scotia's Four Horsemen and ex-Gibraltar casino owner is now operating for Chartwell from Gibraltar although he is a frequent visitor to Chartwell's London office. He is understood to have received an up to 5 percent share stake in return for arranging a cash injection which turned into a bank guarantee but no cash.

The Dembeniotis deal indicates perhaps that all is far from well at Chartwell. A view encouraged by the remarkable £1.4 million loss recently reported. The loss was largely explained by huge expenses and a £650,000 bad debt. Since then it appears the major shareholder, Russian Alexei Stojarov, who has some interesting connections in Moscow, has taken over the management in London. But those with knowledge of the company still wonder just how real are the deals Chartwell talks so much of and how healthy are its finances.

A proposed St Petersburg property deal may well have fallen through. Russian trade experts are also sceptical of claims for major metal or timber deals and suggest the multi-million deal to supply equipment for a Moscow hospital may be less than it seems. Mystery also surrounds claims that the company may owe up to £1.5 million to Palestinian/Jordanian interests.

All of which may help explain the fall in the share price from 86p to 49p — just below the AIM introduction price.

TWO illuminating insights into the life and business times of leading Tory fundraiser Alan Lewis which do not feature in the official version publicised by the president of the Millennium Club.

Four years ago Lewis requested permission to open a branch of his Anglo Manx Bank in London. The Bank of England was unenthusiastic. So too were the Manx authorities who were not keen on AMB's bureaux de change business and were eager to see a substantial expansion of the bank's capital. The BoE politely rejected AMB's application. A year later the bank voluntarily surrendered its Manx licence and ceased taking deposits.

Lewis began as a secondhand car dealer in Manchester. One of his first companies was A&M Lewis (Motor Agents). This crashed into receivership in 1968 owing creditors £125,000 — no small sum in those days. The assets largely consisted of loans due from a director of £97,000. When the receivership ended a mere £7,000 had been collected.

The year before A&M Lewis folded, Lewis resigned from Cliff Holden (Motors) ahead of a near £200,000 loss. The auditors report disclosed that proper books had not been kept, there were questions over property valuations and £240,000 was owed by Lewis companies in liquidation. Many cash transactions had taken place "for no apparent consideration and without supporting documentation". A year later the Lewis debt was deemed irrecoverable.

Lewis put this all behind him and started again with Illingworth Morris in 1983 and has not looked back since.

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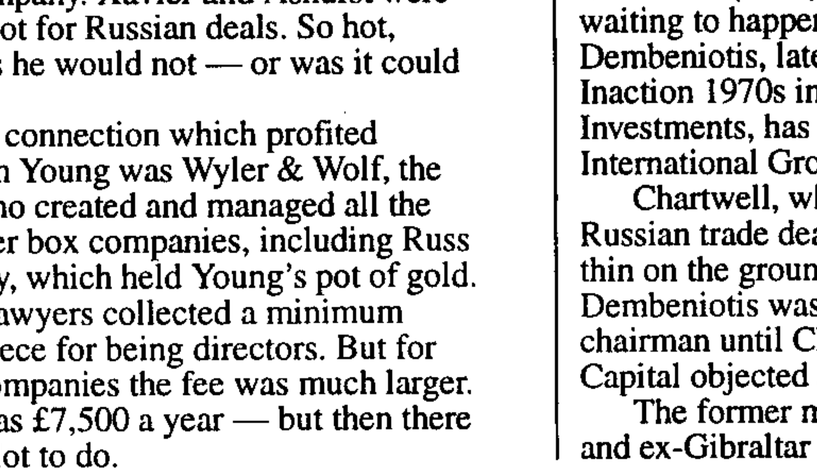

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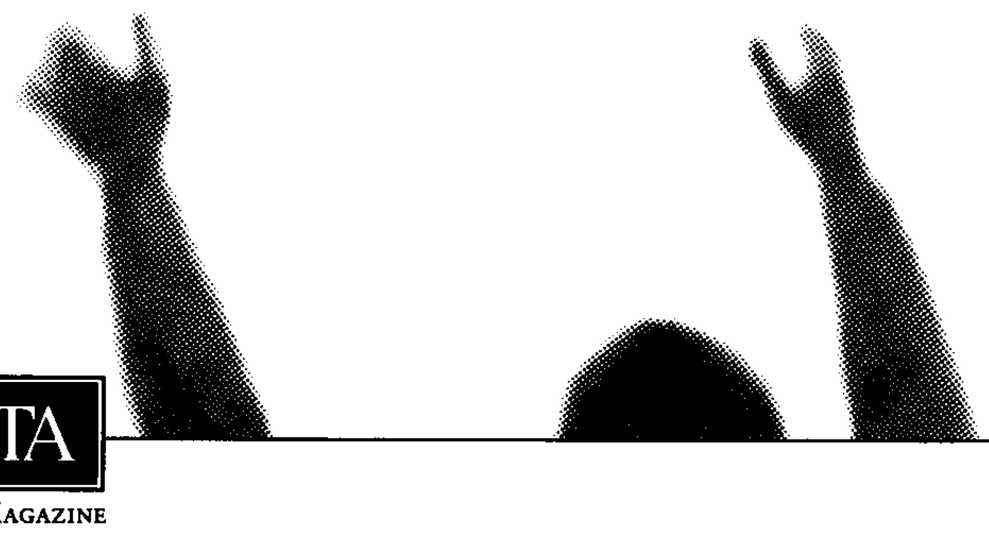

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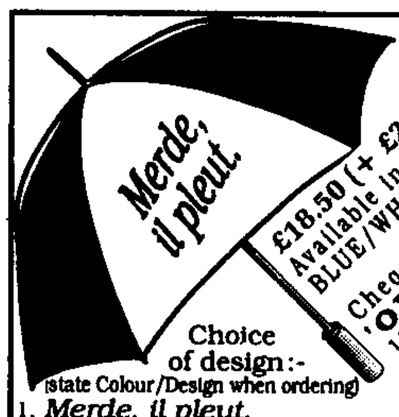

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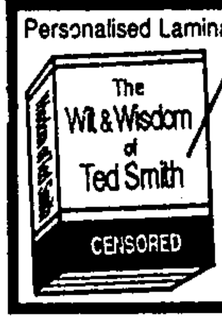

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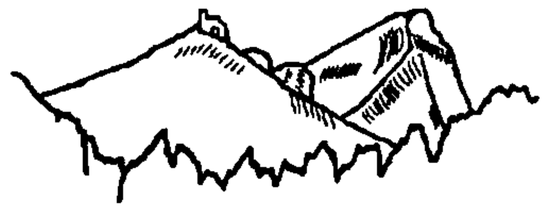

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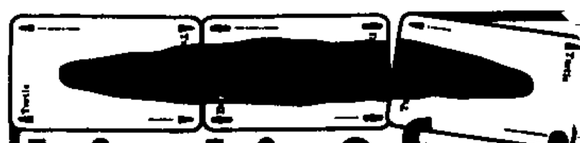

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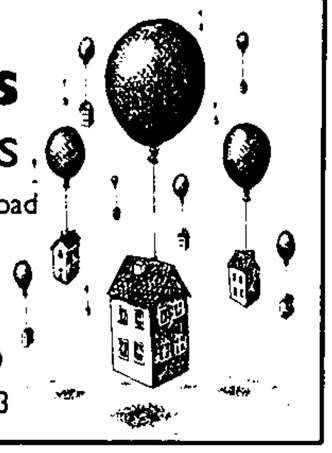

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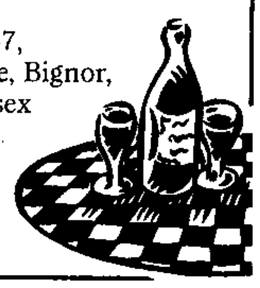

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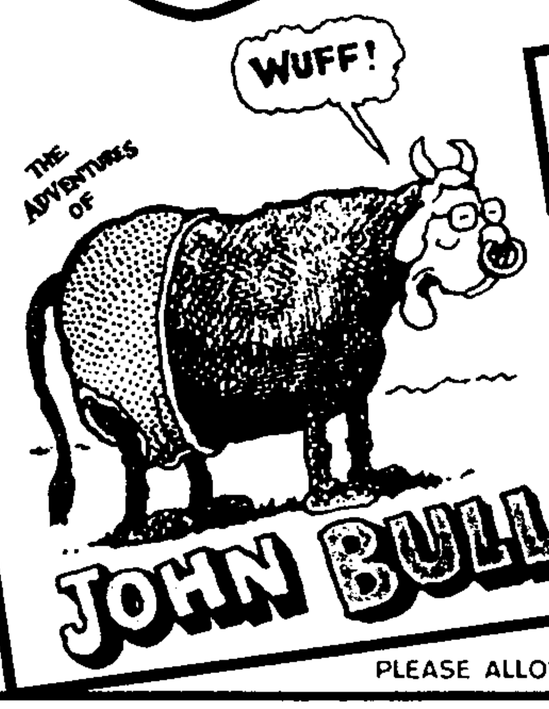

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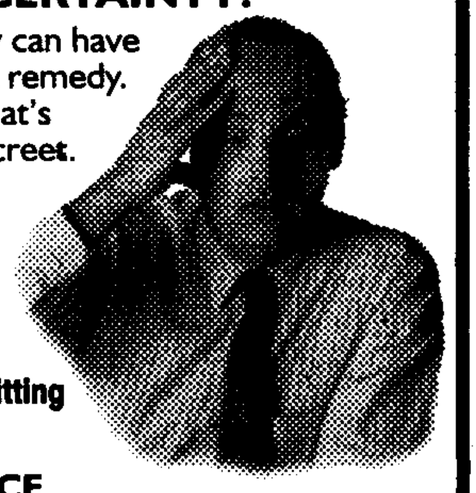

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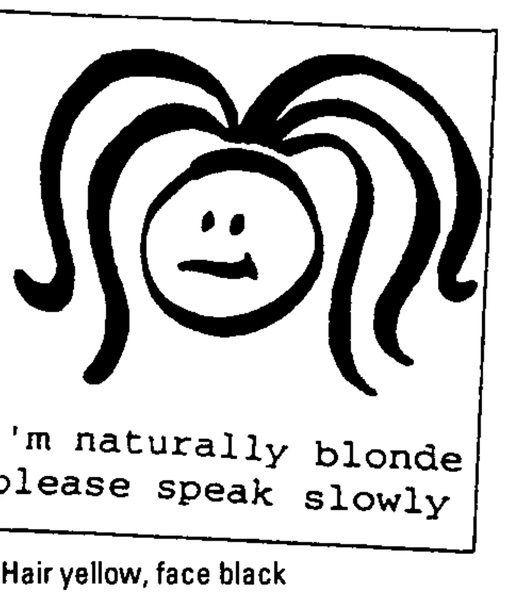

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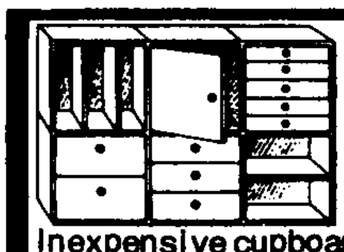

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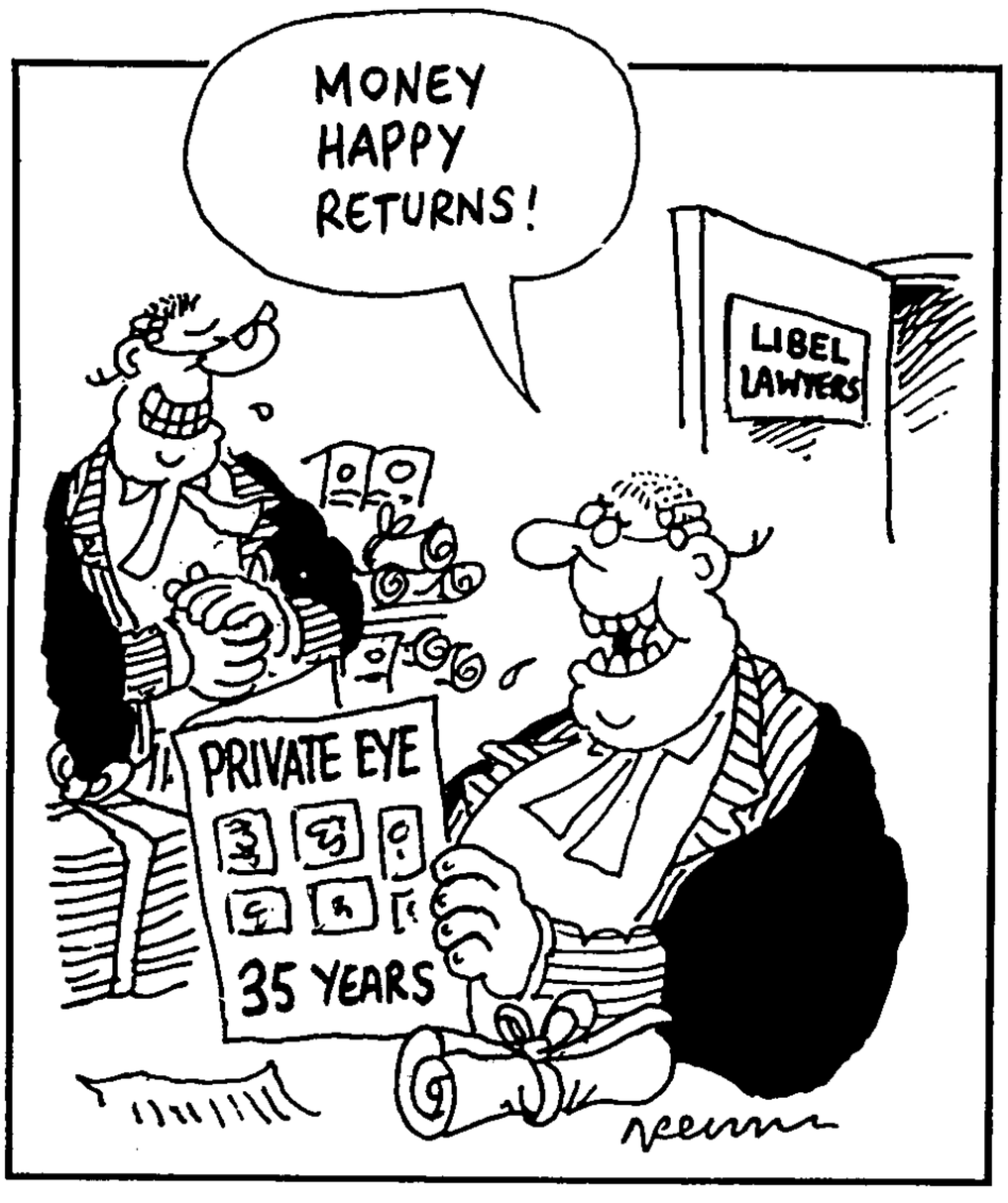

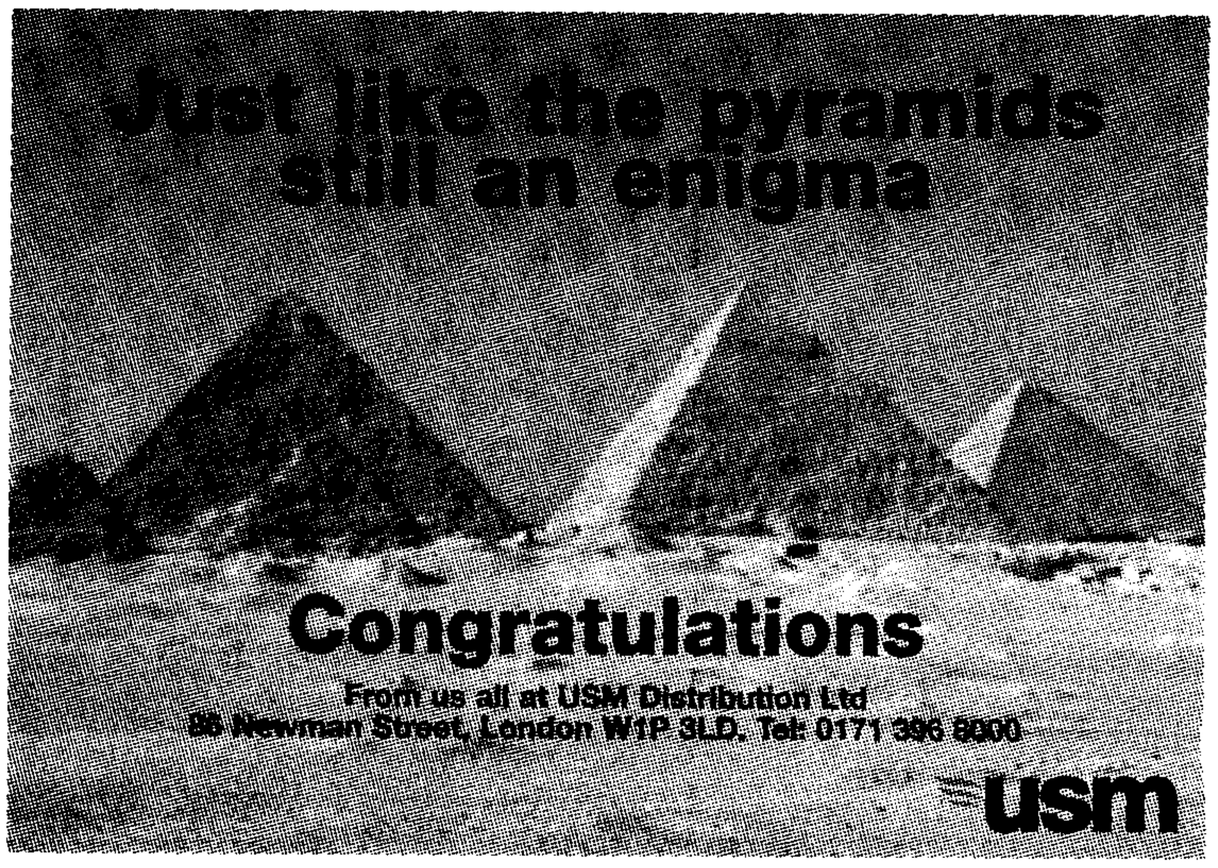
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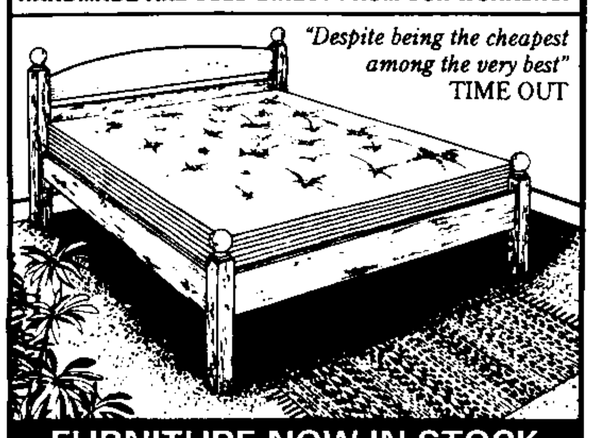

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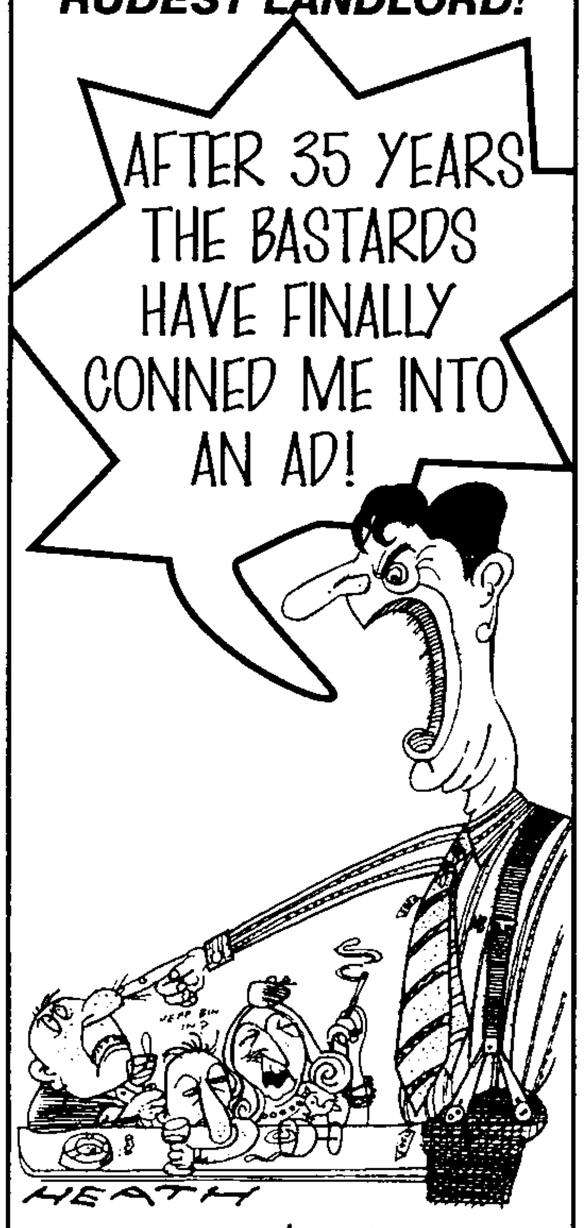

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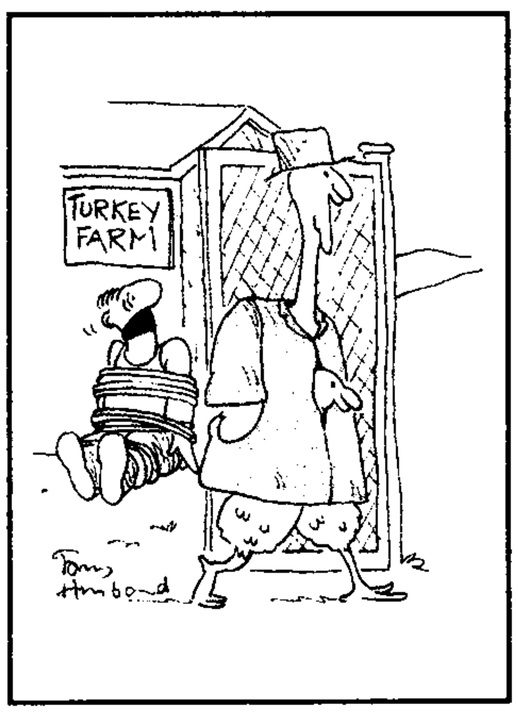

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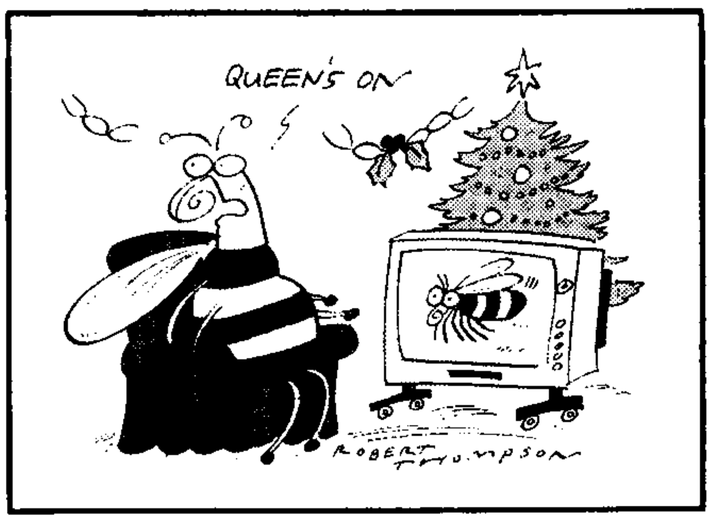

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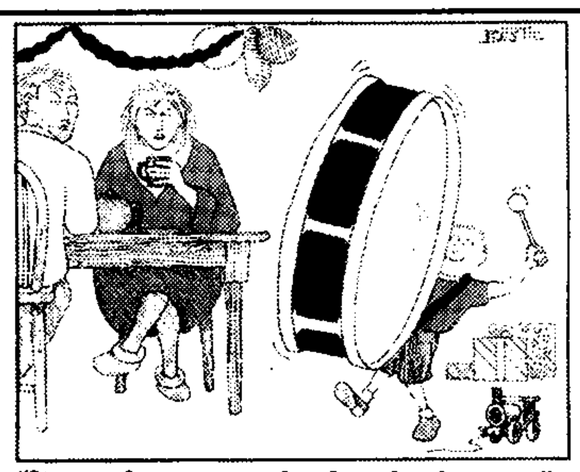

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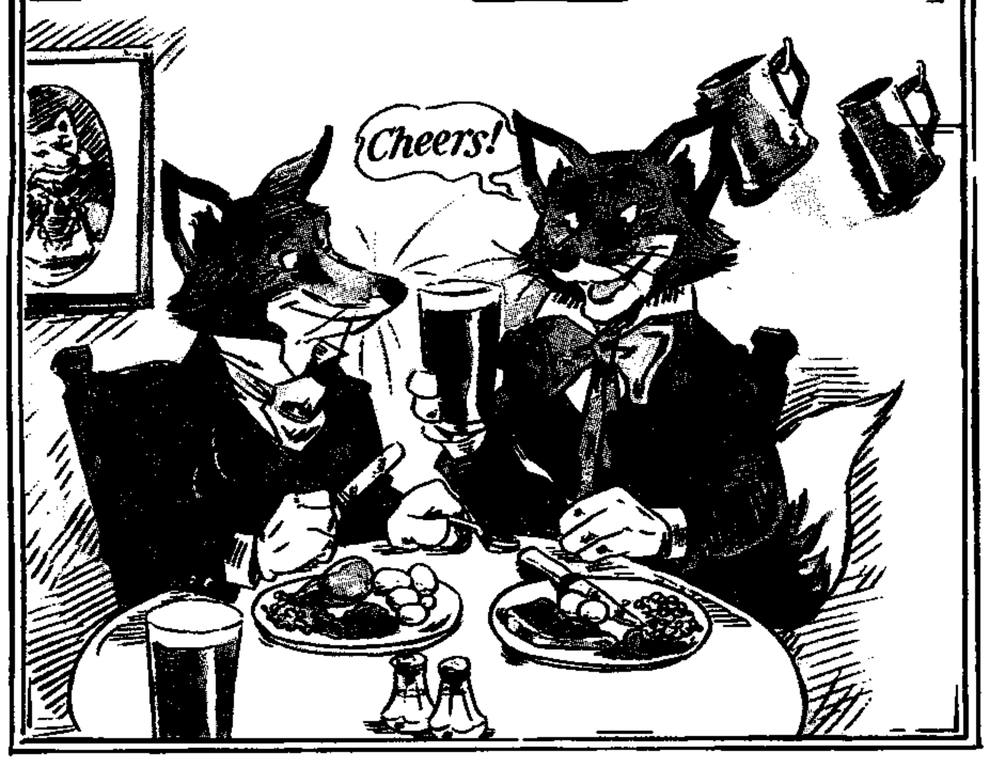

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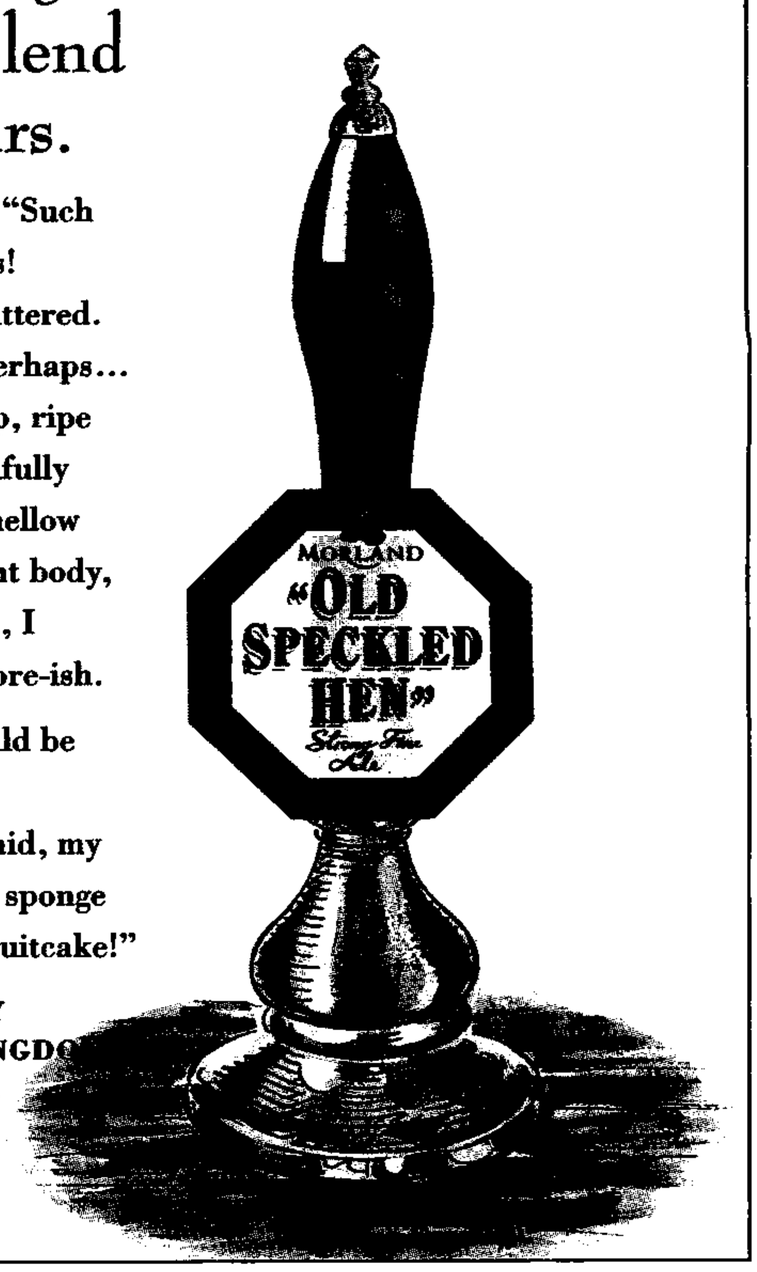

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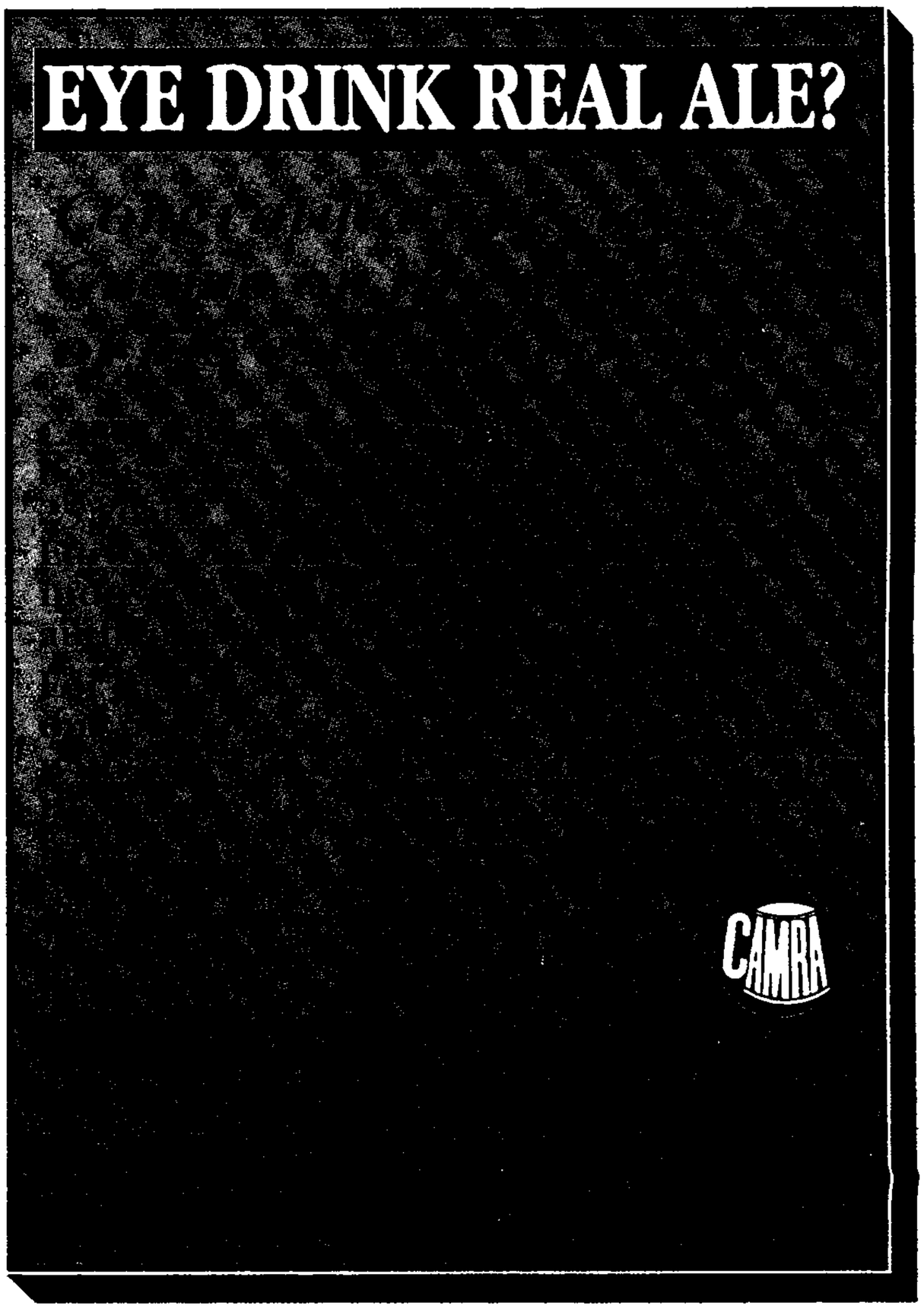

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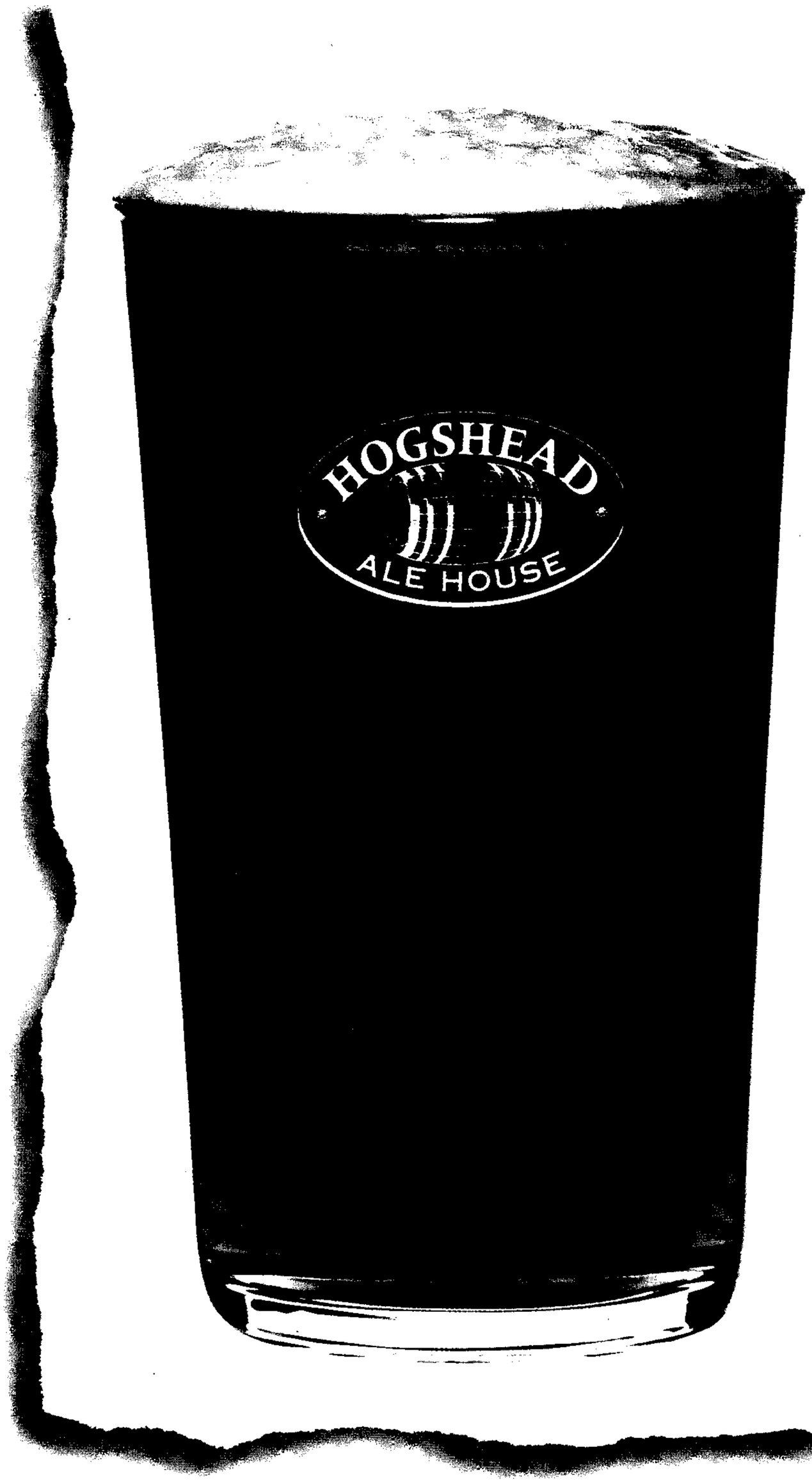

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